



# La Cantante

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# Summary

Bella is a freshman in college studying to be a music teacher. Edward is a pre-med student at the same school but secretly wants to be a musician. They both meet and sparks fly. However, Bella's past may make it difficult. ExB, AH

# Orientation

*Authors Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them :). This is my first attempt at fanfiction. I hope you enjoy.*

## Chapter One: Orientation

### BPOV

It's too bright. It's too warm. What's the deal?

I squinted my eyes open to notice that the blinds were open in my hotel room. It's too early for it to be this bright. Oh right, now I remember. I'm moving into my dorm at university. Charlie insisted on coming a day before move in day, just in case.

I roll over in the uncomfortable hotel bed and scrunch my nose. There's something about the smell of a hotel room that is just nasty. I can only imagine the things that go on in these rooms on a nightly basis. Gross!

I can hear the shower running. Charlie's up. He must have opened the blinds. It's his subtle way for me to get my ass out of bed. Thanks, Charlie.

I roll out of bed and I hear my cell phone chirp, alerting me that I have a new text. Who would be texting me? The only people who have this number are Charlie, Renee, my mom, Phil, my step-dad, my brother Emmett, and Jacob.

Oh, right...Jacob. Shit.

Note to self: get a new phone number.

*Just wanted to say that I'm so proud of you, baby! You're going to do so well in uni! Love you! Mom*

## La Cantante

*You're texting, Mom? - B*

*I'm getting in with the times... :) - Mom*

*Thnks mom! I miss you and love you too! Give my love to Phil. - B*

*Send my love Emmett, baby girl! - Mom*

*Will do! I'll call you when I'm settled - B*

I blew out a breath that I didn't realize that I was holding after my conversation with Renee. That was definitely a pleasant surprise. Renee and Phil, her new husband, were supposed to be here for move in day for college. However, Phil, who is a minor baseball player, tore his ACL in his right knee. He can't really get around and Renee was needed to help him out. This was completely understandable. I had Charlie to help me out. I can also get my big brother, Emmett, to help out, as well.

I just couldn't believe that I am college. I am going to school to pursue my dream: music! I smiled at the possibilities of being at college and a new start that was given to me. This was going to be a great year.

"Bells?"

My dad's gruff voice pulled me from my reverie. I turned to see him. His brown hair, which was graying at the temples, was still wet from his shower. As I looked at him, I frowned. I couldn't put my finger on it, but something just didn't seem right with Charlie. It looked like he was losing weight and his eyes didn't have the same twinkle that they used to have.

"What's up, Ch - Dad?" I asked

"Aren't you going to get ready? We have a lot to do today," Charlie said with a smile on his face.

## La Cantante

"I was just waiting for you to get out of the shower. I'll be ready to go in about 15 minutes."

"Great, Bella. I can't believe that you are going to college! It seems like yesterday, I was holding you as a baby. I'm so proud of you, baby girl," Charlie said wistfully.

"Thanks, Dad. I love you, so much!" I exclaimed as wrapped my arms around my father's waist. He hesitantly returned the hug. Charlie is not the most demonstrative man. I can assume that he was surprised at my display of affection.

"Go get ready, kiddo," he sighed into my hair.

"Okay," I responded as I went to gather my clothes and hop into the shower.

I shut the door behind me and began my morning ritual. I started the shower and brushed my teeth. As I brushed I was determined to make this year the best one ever. It has to be. Last year was horrendous. Anything has be a vast improvement. I looked at my reflection in the mirror with a determined gaze. This will be the best year of my existence. I am positive. It has to be, right?

Charlie was unexpectedly chatty as we drove to the campus. I think he was compensating for my extremely pensive mood. Whenever I am placed a situation where I need to meet new people, I automatically get very quiet. I am very shy by nature. I only had a handful of friends in high school. All of them were a part of the choir that I dedicated my high school year participating in.

While I am very shy when I meet people, my personality dramatically changes when I am performing on stage in choir. It is the one place where I feel comfortable. I am a part of a team. One voice that works in harmony with other voices to create beautiful music. I'll admit that I'm an AWESOME singer. I received numerous awards from my experiences in my high school concert choir (my joy) and show choir (the bane of my existence, but fun none the less). It is because of my singing talents that I am able to attend the college of my dreams: Emerson University.

## La Cantante

They gave me a substantial scholarship for my musical talents. The rest of my tuition was covered by the "Presidential Scholarship" for academics. I guess having a few friends did help out in my college career...no friends equals no social life. What else can you do but study?

Emerson University is a medium sized school that has a phenomenal music education program. It is also the home of one my favorite composers, choral conductors and soon-to-be advisor, Dr. Eleazar Santiago. With my scholarship, I was offered a place in the top vocal ensemble, Emerson University Singers. There are other groups that I will audition for, once classes begin. I smiled at the possibilities that awaited me.

"Isabella! Have you been listening to anything that I've been saying to you?"

"Huh...what? Sorry, Charlie...erm, Dad."

"I was asking if you have your pepper spray that I gave you." Charlie asked.

Ah, the police chief rears his ugly head. My dad is the retired police chief to a little town called Forks, Washington. He was forced to retire after an on-the-job injury. He broke his left leg. It was a compound fracture and he hasn't been able to move around as quickly as he used to. He's currently working as private investigator. He doesn't really like the job, but it pays the bills.

"It's in my book bag. I'm hoping that I'll never have to use it," I grumble.

"I just want you to be safe, Bella. I know that Emmett is going to be at school with you, but..." Charlie trailed off.

"Dad, I'll be fine! Jacob is going to be three thousand miles away from me. He'll be closer to you, in Forks," I retorted.

"I just worry. You're my baby girl. I couldn't protect you from...Jacob," he growled.

## La Cantante

"Charlie! Stop it! It's fine! I'm FINE! Jeez! It's in the past and it will stay in the past."

Charlie eyed me warily. If only he knew what Jacob really did to me, would not be going to school three thousand miles away. I guess what he doesn't know won't kill him. I shuddered at the thought.

"You okay, Bells?"

"Yeah, just nervous," I quietly replied.

"Get over those nerves, quickly. We're here."

I turned my head to right and smiled at the sight of Emerson University. This is going to be my home for the next four years. It was a nice combination of modern, sleek architecture and old-world elegance. However, the best feature was the state-of-the-art music building. It has sound proof rooms for ensemble rehearsals, an awesome music technology lab, recording studio, individual practice rooms and a wonderful stage. If I could, I would have my "dorm" be in the music building. Unfortunately, that will not happen. I'll be the regular dorms, like everyone else.

"You ready, baby girl?" Charlie asked.

"Yup! Let's go!"

Charlie pulled the rental car in front of my dorm, Patterson Hall. I hopped out of the car and danced happily. The dance was short lived as I stumbled over my own feet and fell on my ass.

"Shit! That hurt!"

"Bella, are you okay?" Charlie asked with a smirk on his face. He was trying to hold back the laughter and failing miserably.

## La Cantante

"Thanks, Charlie. Laugh at you daughter's inability to move on a flat surface. I appreciate the concern," I responded sarcastically.

He chuckled and offered me a hand to get up. He then went to the trunk and started unloading my stuff. I dusted myself off and walked into the check in area.

"Hi, I'm Isabella Swan. I'm supposed to live in Patterson Hall. I need to get my keys and check in," I said shyly.

"Welcome to Emerson University! I'm Angela, one of the Resident Advisors," she said as she stuck out her hand. I tentatively placed my hand into hers and mumbled hello. She seemed nice. She was tall and had dark hair that was pulled back off of her face. She also had the coolest glasses. I hoped that she was the RA on my floor.

"So, Isabella, it looks like you are on the second floor, in a triple, room 200. Your roommates are Alice Cullen and Rosalie Hale. They've already checked in and are unpacking as we speak," she smiled.

"Bella...it's Bella. A triple? Really?" I squeaked.

"Yeah, Bella. We are in the process of building a new dorm. It was supposed to be completed by the beginning of this school year, but there were some delays. We had to place some students into triple rooms. The neat thing is that you get a room with your own bathroom," Angela explained.

"I guess that makes up for it. The idea of sharing a bathroom with twenty-some-odd girls is kind of gross," I laughed.

"I totally agree! It also appears that I am going to be your RA. So, if you need anything, please don't hesitate to ask. I'm in room 209."

"Thanks, Angela!"

## La Cantante

"Here are your keys and swipe card. The swipe card allows access to the building and the keys access your room. To get to your room, go up the stairs, turn left and it's the last door on your right."

"Great," I said as I waved to her.

Patterson Hall was one of the newer dorms on campus. It also happened to be a co-ed dorm. Charlie was not happy about that fact, but the rooms were not co-ed, just the floors. I'd be living in an all girls floor. The guys lived on floors one and three. The girls lived on floors two, four and five.

I walked back to Charlie, where he had completely unloaded all of my stuff for my room.

"Are you all checked in, Bells?"

"Yep. You'll never believe it, Dad. I'm in a triple."

"Are you okay with that?"

"At first, I wasn't. However, when Angela, my RA, said that we get our own bathroom, I was quite happy," I responded.

"Can't say I blame you there," Charlie said. "Let's get you all situated."

I nodded as I grabbed my duffel and rolling suitcase. Charlie grabbed a couple of boxes. He winced as he picked them up. I can tell that he was trying to not show his pain. I immediately felt guilty.

"Dad, wait. Let me text Em. He can help with carrying up my crap," I reasoned.

"I'm fine, Bella. However, if you want to text Emmett to let him know that you are here, that would be good."

"Erm...okay," I said as I took out my phone.



## La Cantante

*Hey brother bear - I'm here at Patterson. Come help! Dad is being stubborn - B*

*Isabelly! About time! I'm also in Patterson. I'll be right down! - Em*

*Thanks! - B*

"Hey Dad, apparently Emmett and I are in the same dorm. He's on his way down."

"Oh, thank GOD!" Charlie wheezed as put down the boxes he was struggling with. He leaned against the car and took a sip from a water bottle sitting on the trunk.

"Are you okay, Dad? You don't look so..."

"ISABELLY!"

"Em....can't...breathe..." I choked out as Emmett enveloped me into a bear hug.

"How's my favorite sister?" Emmett asked with a dimply smile.

"I'm your only sister...and don't call me Isabelly. I outgrew that name when I was five," I grumbled.

"Eh, whatever," Emmett responded with a wave of the hand. "Let's get you loaded into your room, Isabelly."

"EMMETT!"

"Sorry, Bella," Emmett said sheepishly. "How are you doing, Dad?"

"I'm good, Emmett. I missed you this summer."

"I missed you, too. I wished I could have gotten home at some point, but the job was insane. It was totally worth it!" Emmett beamed.

## La Cantante

Emmett stayed on campus over the summer as he was offered an internship with local AA baseball team as an athletic trainer. He traveled with team and got innumerable experiences for his major. He wanted to be an athletic trainer for a professional athletic team. When he was offered the position for this summer, he jumped at the chance. I really wished that I could have seen him over the summer, especially after everything that happened with Jacob. I was happy that Emmett got this opportunity, but sad because I didn't have my brother to help me.

"What room are you in, Isabelly?"

I glared at my favorite brother. Seriously, will he learn?

"Room 200. I'm in a triple with two other girls."

"That would have interesting if you were in a triple with two guys. I would have paid good money to see the look on your face if that happened!" Emmett joked.

"You're funny, Em. I think you missed your calling. You should have been a standup comic," I retorted.

"You love me, admit it!"

"I supposed I do. Let's get me moved in, ya dork," I said, rolling my eyes.

Once again, I grabbed my duffel and rolling suitcase. Emmett grabbed several boxes and Charlie grabbed my laptop case and my keyboard. I used my swipe card to access the building and held the door for Emmett and Charlie.

"Angela said that it was up the stairs, then to the left and it's your last door on your right," I instructed.

"You're a floor below me. I'm in a triple with Jasper and Edward in room 300," Emmett explained. "I so can't wait to torture you, Isabelly!"

## La Cantante

"Great, just great," I mumbled.

Charlie led the way with Emmett and I on his heels. I stumbled up the stairs a few times, but managed to fall on my ass. Thank goodness.

We turned into the hallway on the left and walked to the last door on the right side. The door was decorated with three music notes with our names on them. I smiled at the names on the door as I dug out my keys out of my pocket. I was about to unlock the door when it was opened by a very short girl with black spiky hair. She looked like a pixie or Tinkerbell. She had the bluest eyes that I had ever seen. What really surprised me was her energy! It was rolling off of her in waves. She was bouncing on her toes with excitement.

"Hi! You must be Isabella! I'm Alice Cullen! I am 100% certain that we are going to be the best of friends!" she exclaimed as she wrapped me into a tight hug. Boy, she's strong for such a tiny thing!

"It's Bella and it's really nice to meet you," I answered timidly, blushing furiously.

"Rose! Come meet our roommate!" Alice yelled.

A blonde head poked out from behind a closet door. Rose strolled out with her hand extended. She was gorgeous. She was tall and blonde. Rose had a body that a supermodel would sell their souls for. Her eyes were a slate grey and they looked they told a story.

"I'm Rosalie. I just transferred here from Northwestern University. Everyone calls me Rose. Nice to meet you, Bella," Rose said coolly.

"Hi," I whispered.

I looked at my two roommates and was shocked at how beautiful they were. I'm not ugly, but not gorgeous like these two. I'm short, but taller than Alice. I have shoulder length, brown, wavy hair and plain brown eyes. Oh, and I'm pale. Casper, the friendly ghost is darker than me.

## La Cantante

My roommates seemed nice. Rose appeared to be a bit standoffish. However, that was compensated by Alice's exuberance and energy. I smiled at them both and awkwardly maneuvered myself into the dorm room.

"Um, so where should I put my stuff," I asked.

"We haven't decided on beds or anything, yet. We wanted to wait until everyone was here before any decisions were made," Alice explained. "The only decision that was made was about the closets. They're all the same size, so Rose and I staked our claim in our closets."

"That's cool. I'm flexible with whatever. But a word of caution, I'm a klutz. I probably shouldn't be on the top bunk," I replied.

"We were planning on keeping the beds all the same height," Rose explained. "If that's alright with you?"

"Great!"

"Isabelly! What's the hold up? My arms are falling off here!" Emmett shouted.

"Sorry, Em! Come in! Alice, Rose, this is my brother Emmett and my dad, Charlie."

Emmett and Charlie lumbered in with the rest of my stuff and unceremoniously dumped it on the closest bed and desk. Charlie walked to one of the desk chairs and slunk down into it. He quietly sipped his water. Emmett pasted on his dimply smile to greet my roommates. I could tell that he was immediately taken with Rosalie. The twinkle in his brown eyes indicated his attraction.

"Hi, Alice. You're Edward's sister, right?" Emmett asked.

"Yup! That green-eyed freak is my big brother. Are you rooming with him?"

"Yeah. We're a floor above you," Emmett said to Alice, though he was looking at Rose.

## La Cantante

"You would have figured he would tell his sister an important thing like that. What room number? I'm going to kick his ass!" Alice snarled.

"Room 300. Hello, Rosalie. It's a *pleasure* to meet you," Emmett gushed.

"Humph!" Rosalie responded as she turned on her heel to go into the bathroom.

"Emmett!" I cried as I smacked him on the back of his head. Alice chuckled and then went to continue to work on her closet.

"What?" he replied as he rubbed the back of his head. "That hurt, Isabelly."

"Do you need a bucket for all of the drool? Seriously, Emmett," I responded as I rolled my eyes. "Dad, is there anything else in the car?"

"Huh? Oh, uh I don't think so. I'll go check," Charlie responded tiredly.

"No, Dad. That's okay. I'll do it. I just need the car keys." I held my hand out for the keys and he placed them into my hand. I turned to exit my room when I slammed into a wall and fell on my ass. A wall that smelled really good, like fresh linen and sunshine, and had six pack abs.

"Ow!"

"Oh, shit! I'm so sorry," a velvety voice responded. "Are you okay?"

"Yeah, I'll survive," I snorted as I tried to scramble to my feet. I looked up to the wall/person I ran into and I was met with the most piercing green eyes I had ever seen. He reached a hand down to help me up and when our fingers touched, it was like an electric current ran through my entire body. He easily hefted me up and smiled shyly.

"I'm Edward Cullen, Alice's brother. I've been told that she is on the warpath," he laughed.

"YOU!" Alice screamed.

## La Cantante

"What, pixie?" Edward responded sardonically.

"How long have you known that we are staying in the same dorm?" she fumed.

"Uh, about an hour, pixie. The dorm that I was supposed to move into is not done yet so I'm in a triple here in Patterson," Edward reasoned.

"Oh...sorry," Alice replied sheepishly.

"Right, I'm going to check if I have anything else in the car," I stated quickly and exited the room.

Holy crow! Edward had to be the most attractive man I had ever seen. Strong chiseled jaw line, full lips, and the most unusual hair. It was almost bronze and was perfectly tousled. He just screamed sex appeal. Damn!

With unusual grace, I exited the dorm and checked the car for anything that was needed. I got my purse out of the backseat and my messenger bag and headed back into Patterson. I got another bottle of water for my dad.

When I reentered my room, Emmett had left. Charlie had said that he went to the bathroom. Rosalie had returned and was working on her closet. Alice and Edward were talking quietly in a corner of the room. Alice appeared to be excited about something and Edward had a crooked smile on his face.

"Here, Dad. You looked like you could use this," I whispered.

"Thanks, baby girl," he said weakly. "Are you good? Do you need anything?"

"No, Dad. I'm fine. I know you have a plane to catch. Thank you for helping. I truly appreciate it!"

"Okay, baby girl. I'm going to head out," he said wearily. Charlie then pulled me into a tight hug and kissed me on my head. "I'm so proud of you. I love you so much, baby girl."

## La Cantante

"I love you too, Daddy." I cried. "Call me when you land, please?"

"Will do, baby girl. Give my love to Emmett," he said with one final squeeze. "See you soon, baby girl. Call if you need anything!"

"Thanks, Dad." I waved as he left.

I took a deep breath and a wave of sadness overwhelmed me. It almost seemed like I was saying goodbye to my father for the last time. A few stray tears fell down my cheeks. I hastily wiped them away. I turned back to face Edward, Alice and Rosalie and plastered a smile on my face.

"So, Bella. Edward just told me that there is a party on the north side of campus. Do you want to go?" Alice inquired.

"Erm..." I so intelligently replied.

"Come on, Bella! It'll be fun! Edward's band is going to play!" Alice whined.

"Not to toot my own horn, but I think we're pretty good. Emmett plays drums, Jasper plays bass and I play guitar and sing," Edward said with a smile.

"Humility is a good thing, Edward," I snorted.

"Please, Bella?" Alice persisted.

"Fine," I huffed.

"Yay! I'm going to make you look so hot!" Alice squealed as she bounced on her toes.

What have I got myself into? Shit!

A/N - EPOV coming next chapter. Reviews make me happy. Please be kind.

# Unexpected Changes

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## Chapter 2: Unexpected Changes

### EPOV

"Hmmm....Edward."

I felt a light scratching on my chest. Ugh, what is that?

Oh, right. Tanya.

I really need to stop doing this. Just because I'm lonely and horny does NOT mean I should call Tanya. I shuddered at what happened last night.

"Tanya, stop."

"I thought you liked it when I did that, Edward," she purred.

"Not really," I said as I freed myself from her clutches. "I need to go check in at the university."

"Baby, don't go," Tanya pouted.

"I'm not your 'baby.'" I grimaced. "I'm going to hop in the shower and then I got to leave."

"Can I join you?" Tanya asked seductively.

"No."



## La Cantante

I grabbed my boxers off of the floor and pulled them on as I headed to the bathroom. I needed to scrub myself raw after my night with Skankya, erm, Tanya. Why do I keep calling her? I'm such an idiot.

I step into the hot spray, praying that it was hotter to burn the icky nastiness off of my skin. I scour myself with the soap that Tanya bought for me. I don't want to use her fruity girly shit. At least, she's considerate in that way. I finish my shower and brush my teeth. I look at myself in the mirror and I decide that this...whatever THIS is...with Tanya is done. I can't do this anymore.

I walk back into Tanya's bedroom and put my clothes on. I hear her bustling in the kitchen. She's probably attempting to cook. I roll my eyes at the concoction that she is attempting to make and sure enough the fire alarm starts to shrill. I so need to get out of here. Like, NOW!

I grab my messenger bag and head down the stairs where I see Tanya swearing at a frying pan. I can see why I was attracted to her. She has a decent body. Her tits are a little too big for my taste, but at least their natural. Plastic girls are just wrong. Her strawberry blonde hair is shiny and curly. She has a pretty face with a small nose and big blue eyes. However, she is a back-stabbing evil woman. Nice is not in her vocabulary. She is the epitome of "bitch."

"Son of a...!" Tanya yells.

"I don't think the eggs ever did anything to you," I said coolly.

"I wanted to make you breakfast, Eddie," she purred. Purred? Really? Fuck!

"It's EDWARD, Tanya and I'm not hungry," I responded tersely. "You only do things like this if you want something. So what is it?"

"Am I really that transparent, Eddie?"

"Tanya..." I challenged.

## La Cantante

"Oh, fine. I'm tired of this casual bullshit. Why not give it a go? Be official and all?" she asked hopefully.

"Me too," I whispered.

"Really?"

"I'm not finished. I'm tired of the bullshit, too. I don't think this arrangement is working. I can't do casual and sure as hell do not want to be, how did you put it? 'Official!'" I snarled.

"What? Are you breaking up with me?" Tanya sniffled.

"You need to be together in order break up, Tanya," I reasoned. "This was just sex. This is what we agreed to when it began and now, I don't want it anymore."

"You are such a bastard!" She screamed.

The next thing I knew, the frying pan that she was swearing at earlier was being thrown at my head. I deftly ducked out of the way. My head was saved from being impaled by a frying pan. A lamp was not so fortunate. I grabbed my keys, coat and bag and ran out of the small apartment. I walked to my car and unlocked it. I slid into my baby, my silver Volvo and took a few calming breaths. I then heard my cell phone chirp.

*You will regret this, Cullen! No one breaks up with me! - Tanya*

*I regretted ever being with you, Tanya. Lose this number - Edward*

*Fuck you! -Tanya*

*Not anymore! - Edward*

I turned off my phone and maneuvered my car out of the parking lot. I head to my adoptive parents home before heading to campus. I am a sophomore at

## La Cantante

Emerson University. I am a pre-med student. However, my love is truly with music. I'm only a pre-med major to appease my uncle and adoptive father. If I had my way, I'd be in a band, trying to get a record deal. Well, secretly, I'm still doing that. I am in a band. We play at open mic nights as often as we can to get noticed. We've also used the state-of-the-art recording facilities at the university to make a demo. However, we've been too chicken to send it off to any companies.

I pull up to my home and stroll in the front door. I am amazed at what I see. I shouldn't be. I've lived here for ten years. I was adopted by my aunt and uncle after my mom died from cancer. Carlisle and Esme, my adoptive parents, were the epitome of perfect. They both had great careers, in love and happy. However, they were not blessed with the ability to have children. Esme was in a car accident that caused significant damage to her uterus and she couldn't carry a baby to term. Little did they know that when I was ten, I would become a permanent part of their family.

My mom, Elizabeth, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer when I was 9 years old. It was stage four. She only lived 5 months after her initial diagnosis. My father, Edward Sr., tried to handle having a 9 year old boy who just lost his mother, but couldn't. He suffered a nervous breakdown and signed over his parental rights to Carlisle and Esme. I hated him.

However, after many years in therapy and using music as my emotional release, I've overcome my feelings of hatred for him. It also helps that I have two loving parents and a tiny but annoying sister to help.

"Mom! Dad? I'm home!" I yelled.

"Edward! The university just called," Esme said calmly from the kitchen.

My stomach growled at the fact that I haven't eaten. I strolled into the kitchen where I found Esme making blueberry muffins. I swiped one from the plate and ate it greedily.

"Where you raised? A barn?" Esme asked with a smile.

## La Cantante

"Sorry," I replied with a mouthful of muffin. "What did the school want?"

"Edward, I'm sorry but your dorm that you signed up to live in is not complete. They called with your new rooming assignment."

"Shi--oot! That sucks," I grumbled.

"Edward, watch your language," Esme scolded.

"I caught myself," I said with a wink.

"Anyhow, instead of being in a double with Jasper, you are in a triple in Patterson Hall. The good thing is that you guys will get your own bathroom," she reasoned.

"I can live with that," I responded thoughtfully. "On that note, I'm going to finish packing and head out to Emerson. Love you, Mom."

"I love you too, my sweet boy," she said as she kissed my cheeked and ruffled my hair.

I heaved myself off of the stool in the kitchen and headed to my room. Most of my clothes were packed. I just needed to do some last minute packing. I shuffled around the room and grabbed what I needed. I finally grabbed my cell phone charger and began hauling my stuff down the stairs to my car.

I was almost finished packing my car when my mom poked her head out the door. "Edward, I almost forgot, you're staying in the same dorm as Alice. Please keep an eye for her."

"Sure thing. I'll call you when I get settled."

I clambered into the car and waved as I pulled away. I drove the hour and half to Emerson University and pulled into the parking lot behind Patterson. As I drove to school, I had turned on my phone. My voicemail box was full. Shit.

## La Cantante

I listened to the first voicemail and it was Tanya. I pressed the appropriate buttons and deleted all of the messages in my mailbox. I did not want to deal with that shit. I put my phone in my pocket and walked to the check in desk and gathered my swipe card and keys. I started carrying my luggage and boxes up to my room.

-LC--

I was almost unpacked when I heard the lock unclick. As I turned, the largest guy walked in. He was HUGE! He was 6'5" and built like a linebacker. His face was covered with a ton of boxes. He grunted as put his boxes down and turn to face me. Then I recognized him as Emmett, our drummer from our band.

"Emmett! Hey man! I didn't expect to be rooming with you!" I said as gave him the obligatory 'man-hug.'

"How you doin', Cullen? Are we playing at that party on the north side of campus tonight?" he asked with his brown eyes twinkling.

"I'm planning on it. It's all dependent on Jasper. He said he's flying in from Texas and should be here by 3," I explained.

"Cool. Playing the usual?"

"Yep. There is a few acoustic songs that I wrote over the summer that I want to try tonight, though."

"Whatever, man. I'm flexible," Em said lightly. His phone chirped and his face lit up. He frantically started typing on his cell phone.

"Who you talking to, Em?"

"My Isabelly," he smiled.

"Girlfriend, Em?" I asked as I quirked an eyebrow.

## La Cantante

"Um...ewwwwww, no. My sister. She's a freshman here at Emerson and she's moving into the dorms. Actually moving into THIS dorm. I gotta go help her. See you in a bit!

"Cool. Have fun with helping your sister."

Emmett lumbered out of the room and I started to set up my computer and sound system. I could care less about clothes, but the latest technological marvel in music was always on must-have list. I was almost done with setting my sound system when my cell phone shrilled on the desk. I looked at the caller ID warily to make sure it wasn't Tanya. Phew...it wasn't

"Yes, mom?" I asked.

"Alice is ready to kick your butt. Go down and visit her. She's in room 200."

"Such a demanding little thing! I'm going to finish setting up my tunes and then I'll head down. Talk to you later, Mom."

I finished setting up my computer and headed down to the second floor to visit my annoying little sister. I was walking down the hall and noticed that her room was directly beneath mine. The door was open to the dorm. I heard a beautiful voice coming from the room.

"No, Dad. That's I'll do it. I just need the car keys." At this point I had stopped in front of my sister's room where a small brunette slammed into my chest.

"Ow!"

"Oh, shit! I'm so sorry. Are you okay?" I asked nervously as I offered my hand to help her up.

"Yeah, I'll survive," she mumbled as she took my hand. When our fingers touched, there was bolt of energy than coursed through my veins. It was unlike anything I had ever felt before. When she looked up at me, I was amazed the most beautiful brown eyes I'd ever seen. She was very pretty. She had long

## La Cantante

brown hair that was slightly curly. Her skin was so fair that it was translucent, save for the blush tainting her cheeks. I smiled shyly at her.

"I'm Edward Cullen, Alice's brother. I've been told that she is on the warpath," I laughed.

Before this beautiful creature could respond with her name, Alice made her presence known.

"YOU!" Alice screamed.

"What, pixie?" I asked.

"How long have you known that we are staying in the same dorm?" she fumed.

"Uh, about an hour, pixie. The dorm that I was supposed to move into is not done yet so I'm in a triple here in Patterson."

"Oh...sorry," Alice replied.

"Right, I'm going to check if I have anything else in the car," the brunette goddess said before quickly exiting the room.

I noticed that there was an older gentleman, who looked very tired sitting on desk chair. He was talking to Emmett. She must be Emmett's sister.

"Alice, who was that just ran out of the room?" I asked curiously.

"That's Bella. She's the third person here in our room. Why do you ask?"

"Curious, that's all," I replied. "There's a party on the north side of campus. Do you and your roommates want to come?"

"Hells yeah, big brother! Are you guys playing? Is Jasper still with the band?" Alice asked with hope in her eyes.

## La Cantante

For the longest time, Alice was crushing on my roommate, Jasper Whitlock. However, up until this summer, he was in a relationship with Maria. However, the relationship fizzled and Jasper was on the market. I'm not too keen on my roommate dating my sister, but at least I know the guy.

Emmett turned to his dad and said goodbye and left the room. As we were talking, another girl entered the room. She was tall, blonde and reminded me Tanya. She was conventionally pretty but did not hold a candle to Bella.

"Yes, Jasper still plays bass. He should be in town by tonight."

"Yay!" she squealed as she bounced on the tips of her toes.

"Where do you get your energy, pix? You're like the energizer bunny on red bull and crack."

"Meh," she said as she waved her hand dismissively.

At this point, Bella had returned from getting the remainder of bags from the car. She gave her dad a bottle of water and he got up to say goodbye. I felt like I was intruding on their private time together. They appeared to be very close. With a final hug and wave goodbye, Bella's dad left.

Bella appeared to be having a hard time with her father leaving. She took a few cleansing breaths and turned to face Alice and I. She had a wistful smile on her face.

"So, Bella. Edward just told me that there is a party on the north side of campus. Do you want to go?" Alice asked.

"Erm..." she replied. God, she was adorable. *What?*

"Come on, Bella! It'll be fun! Edward's band is going to play!" Alice whined

I decided to help her make up her mind, "Not to toot my own horn, but I think we're pretty good. Emmett plays drums, Jasper plays bass and I play guitar and



## La Cantante

sing."

"Humility is a good thing, Edward," she snorted.

I loved my name coming from her voice. Wait love? Huh?

"Please, Bella?" Alice persisted.

The cutest grimace overtook Bella's face and she thought about whether or not to go. She rolled eyes as she huffed out, "Fine!"

"Yay! I'm going to make you look so hot!" Alice squealed.

The look on Bella's face was pure terror.

"What?" Bella squeaked.

"You, green-eyed freak, out!" Alice commanded.

"Yes, Alice. It was nice to meet you, Bella. I look forward to seeing you tonight," I said with a genuine smile. She looked at me with a pleading look and mouthed "Help me."

I winked and exited the room. I sauntered (yes, sauntered) back to my room. When I got there, Emmett had finished unpacking his stuff and Jasper was just arriving. I assume I had a huge shit-eating grin on my face because Jasper guffawed and Emmett rolled his eyes.

"Eddie's met a girl!" Jasper yelled.

"Shut it! Go unpack, hick. We're playing tonight. I'm going to shower." I grabbed my toiletries, towel and underwear and walked into our bathroom. As I shut the door, I smiled. Tonight was going to be an awesome night. I was determined that I wanted to get to know Bella and the story behind her beautiful eyes. I was going to make her mine.

-LC--

**Okay, Edward is fun to write! Please leave reviews...suggestions...ANYTHING :) Hugs!**

**Party is the next chapter**

# Party Time

**Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them :).**

## Chapter 3: Party Time!

### BPOV

"You, green-eyed freak, out!" Alice commanded as she pointed to the door.

"Yes, Alice" Edward replied with an eye roll. He turned looked at me with his piercing emerald eyes, "It was nice to meet you, Bella. I look forward to seeing you tonight." Edward smiled with a crooked grin.

I pleaded with him not to leave with my panicked expression and mouthed, "Help me!"

Edward winked. WINKED!...and left.

Ass. Gorgeous, six-pack abs, green-eyed ass.

Alice spun me around and ordered me to unpack all of my clothes. She needed to see what she had to work with. As I begun unpacking my clothes, grudgingly, I noticed Rosalie. She appeared to be crying.

"Are you okay, Rose?" I asked.

"Huh? Yeah. I just miss my family," she said quickly. So not the truth, but I didn't want to press her.

"Are you going to come to the party with us, Rose?" Alice sweetly asked. "It's going to be a lot of fun. There'll be a ton of cute guys there. Perhaps..."

"NO!" Rose screamed. Her eyes widened at the prospect of going to the party.

## La Cantante

"I have a meeting with the registrar tomorrow morning. Some of my classes didn't transfer properly and I need to get figured out. I don't want to be hung-over," she said quietly.

"Oh, okay. Well, if you want to come just send me a text. Give me your phone, I'll program my number. Bella, give her your number, too."

Rosalie handed her phone to Alice and she proceeded to program her number into it. She then called her number and her phone buzzed on the bed. Alice handed Rose's phone to me and I did the same. When I handed back Rosalie her phone, she seemed relieved.

"Rose, if you ever want to talk, please don't hesitate to ask. I'm a pretty good listener," I said quietly.

Rose's eyes glazed with tears. She blinked them away, "Thanks, Bella. I think I want to talk, but not right now. You're sweet to offer. I'm going to head to the library and get my ID situated. I'll see you girls later."

"Bye, Rose!" Alice pealed.

"Bye, Rose. And I mean it," I offered sincerely.

Rosalie gave me a sincere smile and grabbed her bag. She left with a brief wave. I went back to unpacking my closet and getting room situated. I really didn't want to go to this party. I wanted to get myself settled: unpack my clothes, set up my computer, make my bed and get familiar with the dorm facilities. It appears that Alice will be a force to be reckoned with. She doesn't seem to take no for answer very easily.

However, this boy...no let me rephrase...this MAN, Edward intrigued me. He was undeniably beautiful. However, he seemed to be genuinely nice. This surprised me. This surprised me A LOT! The "pretty people" at my high school in Forks were rude, arrogant, conceited, mean...need I go on? I was the butt of their jokes. The choir nerd. I shied away from such people. On the other hand, Edward appeared to be nice, polite, genuine, but in need of some humility.

## La Cantante

We'll see about his band. I mean, Emmett is the drummer. How good can they be? Emmett can't find a steady beat if you bang it on his head.

I finished my closet and began to work on my desk and bed. Alice lithely crossed the room and hopped on my desk. Her cornflower blue eyes looked like they had a question that they wanted answered. "Yes, Alice?"

"You like him," she stated simply.

"Like who, Alice? George Bush? That would be a resounding no."

"Edward, silly. You like my brother," Alice chided.

"What? Don't be ridiculous! I've met him for like two seconds. I cannot make an opinion if I like or dislike someone in two seconds," I replied.

"Whatever, you like him. I think the feeling is mutual," she said as she hopped off my desk and starting rooting around my closet.

I was frozen. I blinked my eyes in disbelief. Edward likes me? Pssssssh! Yeah, right. Probably pities me. Don't get your hopes up, Swan. Why would that gorgeous creature like me?

"Bella!" Alice cried as she pulled me out of my mini-pity party, "You are in some desperate need of new clothes. You have some cute stuff, but your closet needs to be 'Alicified!'"

"Alicified? What the hell does that mean?" I snorted.

"Cute and trendy clothes. Your clothes are SOOOOOOOO last season, Bella. Come on, we're going shopping!" she said as she grabbed my hand.

"Alice, wait! I don't have the money to go shopping. Can't you just make do with what's there?" I pleaded.

## La Cantante

"Bella," she said seriously, "if you are going to live with me, you are going to have to learn to love to shop. Besides, who said that you are buying anything?"

"What? Alice, I cannot let you buy me clothes. That's just not...right."

"Okay, Bella. You have a choice. You can come with me and have SOME say as what I buy. OR you can stay here and I completely re-do your closet, Stacey and Clinton-style."

I was floored. I was shocked. How can someone so small be so bossy? I glared at her and she glared back. "So?"

"Ugh, fine! I'll come with you! Do NOT make this a habit, Alice."

"You will so not be disappointed, Bella."

xx LC xx

Alice and I spent two hours at the mall. Those were the two longest hours of my life. It was the equivalent of being in hell. Shopping with Alice was hell. Never again will I go shopping with Alice. Evil, devil pixie.

However, I will also never drive Alice ever again. She drove like an Indy car racer on crack. I was never so fearful of my life. Seriously. I think I aged ten years since we left two hours ago. Is this party worth it?

We walked back to the dorm, our hands filled with multiple shopping bags. I was grateful to head back to our room, our home. While the actual process of shopping with Alice was torturous, we bought some really cute things. I tried to buy a few things but Alice would have none of that. She whipped out her black credit card and bought it all. I don't even want to know how much it cost. How can Alice afford a shopping spree like that? She's a college student!

"My parents are loaded," Alice said.

"Did I say that out loud?" I asked sheepishly.

## La Cantante

"Yep. I can afford this because my parents are loaded. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not some spoiled little rich girl who gets everything handed to me on a platter. I work and I work hard. My parents are just adamant on making sure that Edward and I are comfortable," she clarified.

"I'm sorry I made you uncomfortable, Alice. I didn't mean..."

"Psssh...don't worry, Bella. Edward and I came from very different backgrounds."

"I'm not sure I understand."

"Edward and I are both adopted. I'm not going to tell you Edward's story. He can do that. However, my story is not very pleasant. My parents were drug addicts. I was actually born addicted to cocaine. I was placed in the foster care system at a young age because of my drug addicted parents. When I was four, my parents were both clean and courts granted them custody. I lived with them for eight years. In those eight years, I experienced hunger, abuse, and too many other things to mentioned.

"The Department of Children and Families made a well-child visit that was unannounced and they found me. I was cold, malnourished, poorly dressed and sick. They took me and placed me back into foster care. The attending physician in the ER that found me was concerned about my size. He thought I had a rare bone cancer. He called in an oncologist. I didn't have cancer, thank goodness! I was just tiny. That oncologist is now my father. Dr. Carlisle Cullen and his wife, Esme, took me in. They gave me a brother. They gave me life."

"Wow, Alice. I had no idea," I whispered.

"Carlisle and Esme spoiled me when they got me. They still do. I love them tremendously for what they did for me and I will forever be grateful," Alice said thoughtfully.

I was shocked at what my tiny roommate just shared with me. It was unbelievable. "Are you okay, now?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"I'm fine. I have a mild case of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. However, that is controlled with medication. I'm actually in the process of weaning myself off it. I don't want to be dependent on the stuff for the rest of my life."

I nodded dumbly as we reached our room. I unlocked the door and placed our bags on my bed. Alice immediately went into the bags to divide our spoils.

"Okay, Miss Bella, go shower!" Alice demanded.

"You are so bossy, Alice. Are you telling me something? Do I stink?" I asked as I sniffed my armpit for emphasis.

"Ewwwww, Bella, that's just gross. You don't stink. I just want to start with a fresh palate. Shower! Now!"

"Yes, mom."

I gathered my toiletries and scuttled into the shower.

xx LC xx

"Finished! You look fabulous, darling!" Alice proclaimed. "Doesn't she look great, Rose?"

"Wow, Bella. You really look beautiful. Alice you do wonderful work," Rose enthused.

"I should hope so. I'm going into Fashion Merchandizing as a major, with a minor in business. I should be able to make people look gorgeous," she said with flick of the wrist. "What's your major, Rose?"

"I'm a business major with an automotive minor," Rose said quietly.

Alice and I gaped at each other. "Did you just say automotive minor?" we asked together.



## La Cantante

"Yeah. I'm a bit of a gear head. I want to open up my own garage someday for classic cars," she said with a dreamy look in her eyes.

"You and my brother will get along famously," I said with a smile. "He's also a bit of gear head. He maintained my car until he left for college. Then my ex-boyfriend took over the job when he came here."

"It's Emmett, right? Your brother?" Rose blushed.

"Yeah. He's big and brawny and has absolutely no filter. Total word vomit. But he's a big teddy bear," I said.

"So, Bella. Ready for the big reveal?" Alice asked as she bounced.

"Why not? I just am hoping I don't look like Bozo the Clown with the amount of makeup you put on me."

"Oh, ye of little faith! Look!" Alice exclaimed as she spun me to face the mirror. I couldn't believe my eyes. That girl was not me. Her brown hair was styled in loose waves that hung over my shoulders. My eyes were done with a smoky style with a coating of mascara and a light layer of lip gloss adorned my lips. The teal graphic tank top hugged my curves. My black jeans and boots lengthened my legs. Damn, I looked hot!

"Shit, Alice! You are a miracle worker!"

"You look hot, Swan! Edward is so going to drool when he sees you. I'm going to shower and change and then we'll go, okay?" Alice asked.

"Sounds good. I'm just going to admire while I wait," I said as I continued to stare in the mirror.

"You look really good, Bella," Rose said quietly. "Promise me you'll be careful, though."

## La Cantante

"Of course, I'll be careful, Rose. I'm a police chief's daughter. My dad didn't raise a dummy," I laughed.

Rose chuckled. However, there was a sad look in her eyes. "Just be careful and make sure that you never put your drink out of your sight. Trust me."

"I will. I promise."

My phone buzzed from its home on the charger. I ran to check to see who was calling. *Charlie*. I indicated to Rose that I needed to take the call. She nodded and went back on her bed and perused a fashion magazine.

"Hey, Charlie!"

"Hey, baby girl. I'm home. This place doesn't seem the same without you here. I miss you."

"I miss you too, Dad. How was the flight?"

"Long, boring, loud...there was a crying baby the entire flight."

"Ouch, that sucks, Dad." I cringed for my dad.

"Never happened with you or Emmett," he laughed.

"Oh, really? Why was that, Charlie?" I asked, genuinely intrigued.

"We put a small amount of bourbon into your bottles to make you sleepy if we ever flew with you. Worked like a charm every time."

"Dad! I was a lush as a baby? Jeez!"

"Don't knock it until you've tried it. I'm spent, Bells. I just wanted to call to say that I got in. I love you, baby girl."

"Love you too, Dad. Sleep well."

## La Cantante

As I hung up my phone, Alice swirled into the room. She was a vision in a short black skirt, ballet flats and a bright fuchsia top. Her black hair was spiked and had rhinestones in her barrettes. Her makeup was similar to mine except she wore a brighter lip color. She grabbed her purse and phone. Alice glanced at me, "You ready to go?"

"Yep! Are you sure you don't want to come, Rose?" I asked hopefully.

"Nah, I'm good. Have fun tonight. Call me if you either one of you is too drunk to drive."

"We're walking, silly. Thanks for the offer. See you later, Rose. Don't wait up!" Alice sang as she pulled me out the door.

"Wait, I need my phone!" I ran in grabbed my phone and headed out with Alice.

We walked briskly to the north side of campus. On the north side, it was mainly upperclassmen dorms. It was known for being the "party central" of the campus. It's most distinguishing feature was a huge chapel that most the parties were held. The Chapel was part of one of the dorms, Rathburn. Rathburn was originally part of the seminary school and the monks in training lived in the building. Emerson University purchased the building when the seminary closed down and it is used as a dorm. The Chapel in the dorm is used as a common area. It was great for parties. Bands liked performing there because they can use the pulpit as their stage.

I was giddy with anticipation of seeing Edward and his band perform. His speaking voice was amazing. I can only imagine what his singing voice would sound like.

Alice and I walked toward Rathburn. It was hard to miss. The loud thumping bass coming from the building indicated to us that we'd arrived at the party. Alice turned to me and beamed. "I'm so excited, Bella! It's going to be so much fun!"

## La Cantante

I nodded enthusiastically. As reticent as I was about coming to the party, I was actually excited now I was actually here. The energy that flowed from the building was palpable. It was energy of wild college students having one last fling before the school year. I linked arms with Alice and we walked into Rathburn.

As we entered, we were overwhelmed with the sounds coming from the Chapel. It was insanely loud. The next thing that we noticed were the amount of people in the Chapel. It seemed like the whole school was crammed into one tiny space. It was daunting. This was definitely outside my comfort area. However, I didn't want to abandon Alice. I put on a brave face.

Alice was standing on her tip toes looking up at the pulpit. She was checking to see if Edward and the rest of the band had arrived.

"They're here!" she squealed. "Let's go say hi!"

"Cool beans," I replied. We walked arm and arm up to the stage. Alice forcefully pulled on Edward's jacket to get his attention.

"Hey, Pixie! You made it!" he said as brought her in for a hug. "Hi, Bella. I'm glad you made it out. You look beautiful."

"Thank you, Edward. This was all Alice's doing. I had nothing at all to do with this," I said as I gestured to my outfit. Alice beamed proudly and she danced on her toes in excitement.

"Hey Alice, I have a favor to ask of you," Edward said with a furrow in his brows. "We really want to perform 'Broken' by Seether. Can you sing the female part?"

"Ugh, Edward, I like singing in a group. Not by myself. I can't pull off that sound. I don't have that type of voice."

"I'll do it!" I said without thinking. *Shit*

## La Cantante

"Bella, you know how to sing?" Edward asked speculatively.

"I should hope so. I'm going to school here to be a vocal music major. I love that song. I'll do it."

Edward's face lit up like a Christmas tree. He looked genuinely pleased.

"Awesome. Let me finish setting up and do a quick sound check and we'll run it backstage."

"Cool!"

Edward turned to finish setting up the microphones and amplifiers. Alice grabbed my arm and gaped at me. She pulled me off of the stage and excitedly started waving her hands.

"Alice, breathe." I laughed.

"Bella Bella Bella Bella Bella Bella Bella Bella Bella Bella! Are you kidding me? That is awesome!"

I guffawed at her reaction. I honestly don't know what prompted me to say that I'd sing the song. It was one of my favorites. I was like Alice. I preferred to sing in a group, not as a solo. However, I wouldn't be singing solo, I'd be doing a duet with Edward. I can do this. I have to do this. I need to do this. I will do this. I took a shaky breath and smiled at her.

I looked around the Chapel and was shocked at how many more people showed up. Okay, maybe I can't do this. Crap.

I felt a touch on my shoulder. The shock that went through my system indicated that it was Edward. I involuntarily shuddered and I turned to face him.

"You ready?"

## La Cantante

"No, not really. But why not," I answered shakily. Edward offered his hand and I took it. His hands were soft, save for the tips of his fingers. They were calloused from his guitar playing. The shock that traveled through my body was almost calming. With Edward by my side, I could do anything. However, I would just settle for singing this song and not puking on anyone.

# The Singer

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them. I do not own the rights to Broken, either. I just really like that song.*

*I fully intended to have the party be in the previous chapter, but it made sense to end it where it did.*

## Chapter 4: The Singer

### EPOV

I exited the bathroom with a towel around my waist and a glint in my eyes. I was determined to get to know Bella Swan. I was genuinely pleased when she said that she was coming to the party on the north side of campus. It was being held in Rathburn in the Chapel. That was a fun place to play. It was already set up like stage because it was an old church and we performed in the pulpit. That and the acoustics were sweet! There is something about performing in a church. The chords, voices and sounds are more resonant.

I walked to my suitcase where I had yet to unpack my clothes and grabbed a pair of boxers. I slipped them on under my towel. I proceeded to grab the rest of my clothes for the performance tonight. For performances, I usually wore all black: black jeans, black t-shirt and black jacket. It went with the whole "bad-ass" persona that I adopted for my music. The people closest to me knew that I was not a "bad-ass." Well, except towards Tanya, but she deserved it.

After I dressed, I attempted to tame my hair. That was not happening. It still managed to stick up every which direction, like I stuck my finger into an electric socket. For some strange reason, girls find my hair to be sexy. Right, sure. Okay...Einstein had hair like this and he does not look sexy. I guess the main difference between me and Einstein is that he's, well, dead and I'm not. I'm so rambling...moving on.

## La Cantante

I grabbed my laptop off of my desk and began working on tonight's set list. I wanted to do a variety of fan favorites, along with some new pieces that I worked on over the summer. I perused my music on my computer to create tonight's list.

"Hey, Edward. You know what would be sweet?"

"What Jasper?" I asked as I looked up from my computer.

"If we could sing 'Broken' by Seether. It totally fits my mood with my break up from Maria," he stated simply.

"Hmmm," I replied. "We'd need a female vocalist. Maybe my sister can sing it. She's got a decent voice. We'll ask her tonight."

"Sweet! I'm going to get ready," Jasper said as he bounded into the bathroom to get ready.

"I'm just putting finishing touches on our set list and then I'm going to help Em load up the truck."

I scanned over the perfected list and smiled at the choices that I made, with the addition of "Broken." It was a great song. However, it needed a dynamite female vocalist. I hope Alice would be willing to sing it with us. I printed out three copies of the set list and stuck them into my guitar case. I grabbed my guitar and headed down to Emmett and help him load up his truck.

"Dude, this thing needs to be put out to pasture," I chuckled.

"Hey, don't hate on the truck. It carries all of our shit for this band of ours. So, quit bitching and get your skinny ass in here and start loading, Cullen!" Emmett snapped.

"Aye, aye captain!" I replied with a mock salute after I loaded my guitar into the cab of the truck.



## La Cantante

Emmett and I worked on loading up the drums, sound equipment and other miscellaneous items into the truck bed. We worked quickly and efficiently until it was all loaded up. As we were finishing up, Jasper ambled to the truck with his bass strapped to his back.

"Nice of you to help, jackass!" Emmett laughed.

"I was fixing my hair. Not all of us have sex hair like Eddie. This takes time," he said as he pointed to perfectly tousled blond locks.

I pulled a tarp over the top the equipment and secured it with some rope. I hopped out of the truck. "You guys want to grab dinner before we head to the Chapel to set up?"

"FOOD! Hells yeah!" Emmett boomed.

"Where to, Eddie-boy?" Jasper asked.

"Jasper, seriously? Eddie-boy?"

"What?" he asked confusedly.

"You've lived with me for a year. I HATE the name Eddie. It reminds me of Tanya," I shuddered.

"Yeah, Tanya. What happened with that?" Emmett asked.

"I'll tell you at dinner. Let's go to McFinnigan's," I responded as I walked to my Volvo.

xx LC xx

"Welcome to McFinnigan's! Table for three?" asked a very curvaceous, very blonde hostess.

"Yes, please," I responded to the hostess.

## La Cantante

"This way, please" she said as she was blatantly ogling me. *Please! I'm not interested, sweetheart. The girl that holds my attention is a petite brunette with gorgeous brown eyes.*

"Here you go! I'm Jessica if you need anything at all."

"Thanks, Jessica," Jasper drawled. "But we're good."

We settled into our seats and began pouring over the menu. Our waitress came and asked for our order. We told her and she returned with our drinks. The Jasper/Emmett inquisition began after the waitress deposited our drinks.

"So, Tanya," they both said.

"Oh, shit!" I said as I rolled my eyes at them.

They both indicated that I needed to continue. I blew out a breath and told them about our quasi-break up from this morning.

"About time, Ed! She was a total skank! I don't even want to know what diseases she's got. Nasty," Emmett said with a shudder.

"This is why I always used a condom with her. That I don't want to procreate with bitch. The thought of her with a baby is a bit disturbing. Nasty, definitely!"

"So, did she go totally bat-shit crazy?" Jasper asked.

"You could say that. She threw a frying pan at me. I got out of the way. However, a lamp did not survive the attack."

"A frying pan? Did she recently use it?" Emmett wondered.

"Yeah, I think I still have scrambled eggs in my hair. I'm so happy I'm done with her."

## La Cantante

"So, onto more important topics," Emmett transitioned. "Did you see Bella's roommate? She's smoking hot!"

"I'm assuming that you are not talking about my sister," I sniggered.

"You assume correctly, Cullen. It's Rosalie," he replied dreamily.

"Oh, the blonde? She seems okay. I only spoke with her for like a moment. She's pretty, though."

"Wait, I'm confused. Who's Bella?" Jasper asked.

"Right, the hick wasn't here when we met the girls!" Emmett boomed.

"Em, use your indoor voice," I chided. "Bella and Rosalie are my sister's roommates. They live in Patterson in the room below ours."

"Oh, right. Got it!" Jasper visibly relaxed after the confusion was all sorted out.

Emmett and I chuckled at Jasper's confusion. He's a nice guy, but not the sharpest tool in the shed. His confusion does provide a good amount of comic relief. Part of Jasper's problem is that he lives in the past. This is understandable as he is a history major. He wants to be a history professor. His favorite time period to study is the Civil War era. He enjoys that time in history because his great, great, great grandfather was a Major in the Texas Cavalry during the Civil War. Jasper feels like connected to time period.

We ate in relative silence. Three college guys in a restaurant pretty guarantees silence during meal times. We're growing boys. We need our grease! I did want to talk to Emmett about Bella. However, I figured that now was not the appropriate time. I'll wait until I can confirm or deny that Bella is interested. I don't want to jump the gun and get Emmett pissed off at me over a situation that may never come to fruition. I just really really really hope that she is interested in me.

## La Cantante

We paid our tab and headed to the Chapel. We unloaded our gear and began setting up. We were slated to perform at 9. It was about 8:15. I wanted to make sure that the sound equipment was working properly and wanted to get in a quick sound check before we went to go over our set list.

I was almost done with setting up the amps and microphones when I felt a sharp tug on my jacket. I turned and saw my darling little sister. I smiled when I saw that Bella was with her.

"Hey, Pixie! You made it!" I pulled her in for a brief hug. I then turned to Bella, "Hi, Bella. I'm glad that you made it out. You look beautiful." *Smooth, Cullen.*

Bella blushed. She really was beautiful. "Thank you, Edward. This is all Alice's doing. I had nothing at all to do with this," she replied as she gestured to outfit. She was wearing a tight teal blue tank top with black jeans and boots. Her hair was curled and wild. It looked so soft. Her eyes were all smoky-like and she had goopy shit on her lips. On other girls, it may have looked trashy, but she looked gorgeous.

I reluctantly turned away from Bella and looked at my sister, "Hey Alice, I have a favor to ask of you," I pouted. "We really want to perform 'Broken' by Seether. Can you sing the female part?"

"Ugh, Edward. I like singing in a group. Not by myself. I can't pull off that sound. I don't have that type of voice," Alice responded.

Before I could protest, Bella replied, "I'll do it!"

My eyebrows shot up to my hairline. "Bella, you know how to sing?" I asked. *How about I insult her if she can sing? Fuck.*

"I should hope so. I'm going to school here to be a vocal music major. I love that song. I'll do it," she beamed.

## La Cantante

I'm pretty certain that my face lit up like Clark Griswold's house on Christmas eve. "Awesome! Let me finish setting up and do a quick sound check and we'll run it backstage!"

"Cool," Bella said. She smiled, but it didn't quite reach her eyes. She looked nervous.

I turned to finish up my set up. I did a mic check and checked the levels for the guitars. It all seemed to be in order. My only concern was when Bella sang, we would need to adjust her microphone. I have my mixer set up for all male voices and I'd need to adjust for her voice. I was planning on doing "Broken" with just acoustic guitar. Perhaps Jasper could adjust the levels as we sung.

I looked over to Bella and Alice and they were conversation. Alice was being her usual pixie-self. Bella looked like a deer in headlights. I walked over to them and I touched Bella on the shoulder.

The same jolt of energy that I felt earlier was there, but amplified. I had touched her bare shoulder and the skin to skin contact made the jolt more substantial. She turned to face me after she shuddered. Surely, she didn't feel it too?

"You ready?" I asked.

"No, not really. But why not," she responded shakily.

I offered my hand and her tiny hand slipped into my mine. It almost seemed like I was supposed to hold her hand. It fit so perfectly. Her hand was so small and delicate. The energy flowed between hands was amazing. I never wanted to let it go. I gently pulled on her hand and we headed backstage.

As I pulled back the curtain that divided the backstage area from the performance area, I warily looked at Emmett. He looked up as Bella and I walked in. His features broke into a huge, dimply grin.

"Isabelly!"

## La Cantante

"Inside voice, Em," I said as I rolled my eyes. Bella walked up to Emmett and smacked him on back of the head.

"Shit, Bella! Stop hitting me!" he whined.

"Stop calling me Isabelly, you big oaf," she sniggered.

"Are you singing with us tonight, Bella?" Emmett asked.

"Uh, yeah. Just one song. 'Broken,'" Bella clarified. "I'm nervous. In all my years in choir, I never had a solo. I don't know what prompted me to volunteer."

"Well, you're going to rock, Isabelly! You should hear her, Eddie! Voice like an angel! She got a full ride scholarship because of her voice."

"Not a full ride, Em," Bella admonished.

"Is he serious?" Bella nodded. "I guess I'm going to see you in at least one class."

"Really, what's that?" she asked genuinely interested.

"The University Singers. I sing second tenor/first baritone. I also received a scholarship. However a small one. Jasper is in the group as well. He sings bass."

"Awesome! I will be singing first soprano," Bella grinned.

I smiled in return. I was very excited at the prospect of singing with Bella on a daily basis. If she got into the University Singers, she had to be good.

"Let's run the song; check tempos and vocal balance."

"Rock on!" she exclaimed and she made the rock face. So adorable.

## La Cantante

xx LC xx

During our brief rehearsal, I was blown away by Bella's voice. We ran the song twice before she exited the backstage area to rejoin Alice. We would be singing the song about halfway through our set. After Bella left, I discussed the set list with Jasper and Emmett. We said a quick prayer (not that we're religious, but it seems that we play better when we have God on our side) and headed out onto the stage.

We started our set with a fun song. What college party is complete without Blink 182's "What's My Age Again?" The crowd cheered. We played about seven songs before my duet with Bella.

"We're going to slow things down a bit. The next song that we're singing is 'Broken' and features a guest vocalist, Bella Swan," I said into my microphone.

Bella slowly walked up to the stage and took her place to my right. I picked up my acoustic guitar and started strumming the introduction. As I was playing, Bella was taking a few calming breaths. I took my own calming breath and began singing.

*I wanted you to know I love the way you laugh  
I wanna hold you high and steal your pain away  
I keep your photograph, I know it serves me well  
I wanna hold you high and steal your pain*

*'Cause I'm broken when I'm open  
And I don't feel like I am strong enough  
'Cause I'm broken when I'm lonesome  
And I don't feel right when you're gone away*

I was amazed at how well our voices blended. It was almost like we were meant to make music together. The shy girl that rehearsed with me backstage was gone. In her place was a confident singer.

## La Cantante

*The worst is over now and we can breathe again  
I wanna hold you high, you steal my pain away  
There's so much left to learn, and no one left to fight  
I wanna hold you high and steal your pain*

Her voice was like an angel. It soared through the amplifiers. It resonated through the Chapel. As she sung, it brought tears to my eyes. She was perfect.

*'Cause I'm broken when I'm open  
And I don't feel like I am strong enough  
'Cause I'm broken when I'm lonesome  
And I don't feel right when you're gone away*

*'Cause I'm broken when I'm open  
And I don't feel like I am strong enough  
'Cause I'm broken when I'm lonesome  
And I don't feel right when you're gone away*

*'Cause I'm broken when I'm open  
And I don't feel like I am strong enough  
'Cause I'm broken when I'm lonesome  
And I don't feel right when you're gone away*

We finished the song and crowd roared! Bella looked so surprised. She turned to me with a sparkle in her beautiful brown eyes. They were glazed over with unshed tears. I pulled her into a tight hug. I smiled into her soft hair and realized that I did it. I found my singer. *Il mio cantante.*

**Okay, I'm very proud of this chapter. I hope you enjoyed it.**

**Songs in this Chapter:**

**What's my Age Again, Blink 182**

**Broken, Seether featuring Amy Lee**



# Reaction

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them. I do not own "Broken" or "Wanted, Dead or Alive." Just AWESOME SONGS!*

## Chapter 5: Reaction

### BPOV

I walked hand in hand with Edward to backstage area of the Chapel. He pulled back the curtain where Emmett and another blonde guy were hanging out. The blonde guy, I'm assuming was Jasper, waved with a smirk. Edward was warily looking at Emmett and when Emmett looked up he broke into a huge grin. I smirked back.

"Isabelly!"

"Inside voice, Em," Edward laughed.

I rolled my eyes and walked up to Emmett. I smacked him on the back of the head. *When will he learn? My name is BELLA! Not Isabelly! Yeesh!*

"Shit, Bella. Stop hitting me," Emmett whined.

"Stop calling me Isabelly, you big oaf," I said as I crossed my arms across my chest.

"Are you singing with us tonight, Bella?" Emmett asked. I'm not surprised he asked that. I'd never volunteered to do solos in high school. I was too much a chicken to put myself in front of an audience to have my voice scrutinized. I knew I was good, but I didn't want to fuck up.

"Uh, yeah. Just one song. 'Broken,'" I clarified, not really looking him in the eyes. "I'm nervous. In all my years in choir, I never had a solo. I don't know

## La Cantante

what prompted me to volunteer."

*The hot, green-eyed lead vocalist is why. Don't be ashamed to admit it, Swan!*

"Well, you're going to rock, Isabelly! You should hear her, Eddie! Voice like an angel. She got a full ride scholarship because of her voice," Emmett bellowed.

"Not a full ride, Em," I chided. *Close enough, though.*

"Is he serious? I guess I'm going to see you in at least one class," Edward said with a crooked grin.

"Really, what's that?" I questioned.

"The University Singers. I sing second tenor/first baritone. I also received a scholarship. However a small one. Jasper is in the group as well," Edward motioned to the blonde guy. "He sings bass."

"Awesome! I will be singing first soprano," I squealed. *Really, Bella? Squealed?*

Edward grinned crookedly, "Let's run the song; check tempos and vocal balance."

"Rock on!" I said as I made the universal "rock on gesture" and banged my head. *I'm such a nerd.*

Edward picked up his acoustic guitar and began tuning it. When he was satisfied, he grabbed his capo and affixed it to the neck of the guitar. He began plucking out the introduction to the song. He smiled at me before he began singing the first part of the song. His voice was amazing. It was smooth, but had a bit of a rough edge. I assumed he adjusted voice for the song that he was singing. I was blown away.

## La Cantante

At the chorus of the piece, I joined him. I was tentative. I didn't want to overpower his beautiful voice. I also didn't want to suck. Our voices blended perfectly. It seemed that our voices were made to sing together. My heart was pounding at the fact that I was singing with this beautiful creature. As we continued, the next verse was mine. I timidly sang the words, praying that I could perform in front of the growing crowd. Edward had a look on his face that I couldn't place as I was singing.

*Was it awe? Was it lust? Love?*

We finished our run through and Edward wanted to brush up a few spots. I can tell that he was a perfectionist with his music, like me. We fixed the spots that were problematic and ran it one more time.

"Wow, Bella!" Jasper said, with a look of awe on his face.

"Yeah, Wow, Isabelly. I didn't know you had it in you. You really are going to kick ass tonight," Emmett said as he gathered me in a bear hug.

"Need...to...breathe...Em," I squeaked out.

"Sorry, Isabelly."

I got out of Emmett's arms and turned to Edward, "Are we good?"

"We're more than good. We're great," he breathed. "We're going to sing the song about halfway through our set. I'll make an announcement before you are going to join us. I can't wait to perform with you, Isabella."

Edward's jade eyes pierced through me as he smiled at me. My heart fluttered at the intensity of his gaze. I had never had this type of reaction to guy before. Not even Jacob.

*Ugh, why did I bring him up? He's an ass.*

## La Cantante

"I'm going to head back out front to find Alice. I'll see you guys in a little bit. Break a leg," I said shyly.

I turned and exited out of the curtained backstage area. I headed offstage and looked for Alice. She was hard to miss. She was bouncing up and down, with her hands clasped in front of her. She was dying for information. When our eyes locked, Alice broke into a near sprint to me. She started speaking but she was talking so fast, I couldn't understand what she was saying.

"Alice! Slow down! I can't understand you," I giggled.

Alice took a deep breath and grinned, "Let me try this again. What happened backstage? How was the song? How were the guys? Is it going to be best ever? Don't answer that, I know it's going to rock."

"Holy crow, Ali. Relax...breathe," I said. "We ran the song backstage. Edward has an amazing voice. It's smooth and gravelly at the same time. It's hard to describe. It almost seemed like we were meant to sing together. Our voices blended perfectly. The guys were fine. Emmett is shocked I volunteered. Honestly, I'm shocked I volunteered. There was a third guy backstage, too. I think his name was Jasper. He was pretty quiet. Cute, though. And yes, it is going to be the best, ever!"

"Omigod!" Alice screeched. She encircled me into a tight hug. "You're it!"

"I'm what?" I asked confusedly.

"Edward's soul mate," she confirmed simply.

"Ali, I've known him for less than a day. He's not my soul mate. We're friends, I think," I reasoned.

"You're his soul mate. *Il suo cantante*," Alice sang.

"His singer? What's that supposed to mean?"

## La Cantante

"He'll tell you. Wait, you know Italian?"

"I know some words. Most of them are from songs that I've sung in high school. I'm planning on taking Italian here at Emerson as one of my electives," I said as the lights began to dim. "The guys are getting ready to perform."

Alice grinned and turned to face the stage. Emmett lumbered behind the drums and Edward and Jasper walked to the front of the stage with their guitars.

"Welcome back, everyone! We're Breaking Midnight and we're excited to be here. Enjoy the show," Edward's velvety voice rang through the amplifiers. He grinned crookedly and looked back at Emmett. He gave a very fast beat and the boys came in with their guitar parts. I smiled at their choice. "What's My Age Again" is a perfect opener.

Edward was dynamic on stage. He was poised, confident and hot. His long, lean fingers ran along the fret board of his guitar with ease. I could barely tear my eyes away from him the entire time he was on stage. At some point during the third song, Edward's emerald eyes caught mine. He winked and held my gaze for an immeasurable amount of time. It almost seemed like he was singing to just me. I timidly smiled at him as I bounced to the song. Breaking Midnight was really good.

After the seventh song, Edward put down his electric guitar and picked up his acoustic. He sat down on a stool that was on stage and spoke into the microphone, "We're going to slow things down a bit. The next song that we're singing is 'Broken' and features a guest vocalist, Bella Swan."

I slowly walked on stage. *Please don't fall.* I took my place on Edward's right and gave him a shy smile as I got situated behind my microphone.

Jasper had hopped down off stage and was fiddling with the mixer. I'm assuming that he was adjusting the microphone levels so I didn't sound like a guy.

## La Cantante

Edward began playing the introduction. I took a few breaths as he played and began singing. I closed my eyes and started swaying to the music. A small smile played on my lips as I began singing.

*I wanted you to know I love the way you laugh  
I wanna hold you high and steal your pain away  
I keep your photograph, I know it serves me well  
I wanna hold you high and steal your pain*

A small smile played on my lips as I began singing. I was meant to sing with Edward. The energy flowed between the two of us was palpable. It was magical.

*'Cause I'm broken when I'm open  
And I don't feel like I am strong enough  
'Cause I'm broken when I'm lonesome  
And I don't feel right when you're gone away*

I turned to look at Edward as I sang my verse. The same look that was in eyes as we rehearsed was there again. I confidently turned to the audience and sang with all of my heart. I had no fear. I could do anything with Edward at my side.

*The worst is over now and we can breathe again  
I wanna hold you high, you steal my pain away  
There's so much left to learn, and no one left to fight  
I wanna hold you high and steal your pain*

*'Cause I'm broken when I'm open  
And I don't feel like I am strong enough  
'Cause I'm broken when I'm lonesome  
And I don't feel right when you're gone away*

*'Cause I'm broken when I'm open  
And I don't feel like I am strong enough  
'Cause I'm broken when I'm lonesome  
And I don't feel right when you're gone away*

## La Cantante

*'Cause I'm broken when I'm open  
And I don't feel like I am strong enough  
'Cause I'm broken when I'm lonesome  
And I don't feel right when you're gone away*

As the song finished, I smiled inwardly. I vaguely heard the crowd roar. I looked up and I was shocked at their reactions. I turned to face Edward. His smile huge. My eyes watered with unshed tears. I had done it with Edward at my side. He put his guitar in the stand and crossed the stage. He pulled me into a tight hug. I hesitantly placed my arms around his waist. After I'd done that, I melted into his body. I felt safe. It felt like home. I felt Edward smile into my hair and he pressed a light kiss on my forehead.

I pulled away and looked up into his eyes. They were dark with intensity and the same unknown emotion from earlier.

" *Il mio cantante*," he whispered.

" *Il suo cantante*," I whispered back.

"Edward!" Jasper hissed. That broke the spell. Edward and I pulled apart. He still held onto my hand and he gestured to me with a grin on his face.

I nodded my head to the audience in acknowledgement of their applause. I slowly crossed the stage and exited. How I managed not to fall, I'll never know. I'm grateful, though.

I loped to Alice who was staring at me with her mouth open like a fish. I chuckled as I pressed my finger to her chin and closed her mouth.

The boys sang a few more songs before their final piece.

"Thanks for coming out tonight. It was a pleasure singing for you. Please enjoy our final song this evening," Jasper drawled.

Edward had picked up his acoustic guitar and began strumming.

***Jasper***

*It's all the same  
Only the names will change  
Everyday  
It seems we're wastin' away  
Another place  
Where the faces are so cold  
I drive all night  
Just to get back home*

*I'm a cowboy  
On a steel horse I ride  
I'm wanted  
Dead or alive  
Wanted  
Dead or alive*

***Edward***

*Sometimes I sleep  
Sometimes it's not for days  
The people I meet  
Always go their separate ways  
Sometimes you tell the day  
By the bottle that you drink  
And times when you're alone  
All you do is think*

*I'm a cowboy  
On a steel horse I ride  
I'm wanted  
(Wanted)  
Dead or alive  
Wanted  
(Wanted)  
Dead or alive*



*Ohh alright  
Ohh*

*Oh I'm a cowboy  
On a steel horse I ride  
I'm wanted  
(Wanted)  
Dead or alive*

***Both***

*When I walk these streets  
A loaded six string on my back  
I play for keeps  
'Cause I might not make it back  
I've been everywhere  
(Ohh, yea)  
Still I'm standin' tall  
I've seen a million faces  
And I've rocked them all*

*'Cause I'm a cowboy  
On a steel horse I ride  
I'm wanted  
(Wanted)  
Dead or alive*

*I'm a cowboy  
I got the night on my side  
And I'm wanted  
(Wanted)  
Dead or alive  
And I'm right  
(And I'm right)  
Dead or alive  
I still drive  
(I still drive)*

*Dead or alive*

*Dead or alive*

*Dead or alive*

*Mm dead or alive*

*Dead or alive*

"Thank you," Edward with a crooked grin as the lights faded to black. The crowd went wild.

When the lights came up, the boys were gone. I assumed they went backstage. I turned to Alice and pointed with my head to go backstage. She exuberantly nodded yes and bounced on her toes. We had taken no more than two steps when a blonde woman stepped in front of us.

"He's not yours, bitch," she scowled.

"Who's not mine?" I growled.

"Edward. Just because you sung with him one time means you have no claim on him," she threatened. She took a step towards me. Her hair was straight and strawberry blonde. She had a pinched expression on her face and her eyes glared at me with pure hatred.

"Excuse me..." I sneered.

"Tanya."

"Well, excuse me, Tanya. I'm heading backstage to see my brother. The drummer. If you'll just let me pass, that would be fabulous."

"I don't think so, bitch," she snarled as she grabbed my arm.

"Tanya! Take your filthy hands off of her!" Edward roared. When Tanya heard Edward's voice, her featured softened and turned seductive.

## La Cantante

*Were they dating? Figures. He's definitely not interested in your mousy ass.*

"Hey baby," she purred as she released my arm. She lightly scratched up his chest to his hair. Edward's features grimace and he swatted her hand away.

"What did I tell you earlier, Tanya? I'm not your 'baby.' Never was, never will be. Go find some random guy to blow and leave my sister and the newest member of Breaking Midnight alone," he threatened.

"Fuck you, Edward! You're such an asshole!" Tanya screamed as she slapped Edward across the face.

I involuntarily flinched at the contact.

*Jake, shit.*

I looked at Edward and he sneered at Tanya as he rubbed his now pink cheek. "Hit me again, Tanya. I will call the cops. Leave!"

Tanya huffed and turned on her heel. She stomped away into the crowd.

Edward turned to look at me with concern written over his beautiful features. I was visibly shaken by the whole situation and was cowering over what transpired. He took a tentative step towards me, "Bella?"

I involuntarily took a step backwards, distancing myself from the violence. *I hate you, Jacob!*

"Bella, baby? Are you okay?" Edward asked. I looked at him and saw the concern there. I blinked a few times and tears poured down my cheeks. Edward reached for my face and wiped the tears away with his thumbs. I instinctively leaned into his touch. I melted into his arms and he held me like his life depended on it.

I tried to stop the tears from falling, but couldn't. I didn't realize that as Edward was holding me he was moving me to the backstage area. We sat down on the

## La Cantante

ratty couch that was there.

"Bella, are you alright? I'm really worried here," Edward said brokenly.

I didn't trust my voice, so I nodded.

I hesitantly pulled away and looked for something to wipe face with. I probably was raccoon, splotchy mess. I found some paper towels and began dabbing my cheeks. I took a shaky breath and turned to look at a very anxious Edward.

"It's a long story, Edward. I'm not really ready to tell you or anyone else for that matter. However, I don't react well to violence," I whispered.

"Were you hurt? Did someone attack you," he growled quietly.

"Kind of," I said as I played with an invisible string on my jeans. I didn't want to look at Edward, but I did anyway. His features were pulled into a murderous gaze. He looked at me and saw the fear on my face. His face softened and he pulled me into his lap and held me tight.

"I'm sorry, Bella," he said as he rocked me. I exhaled a breath that I didn't realize that I was holding. For the first time in my short life, I felt truly safe. I felt loved.

"Can you please not tell anybody?" I asked softly. "Especially Emmett. If he knew, he'd kill Jacob."

"Is Jacob the guy who...attacked you?" Edward snarled.

I nodded, "He didn't attack me, really. More like controlled me and made me feel like I was nothing."

"Bella," Edward said as he pulled me off his lap. He took my face into his hands, "You are not nothing. I've only known you for a few hours, but I can safely say that you are kind, genuine, talented and beautiful. This Jacob is an asshole for treating you that way."

## La Cantante

My eyes teared up again but not in sadness. I was overwhelmed at the beautiful words that Edward just shared with me.

"Don't cry, baby," he said softly. I closed my eyes and tried to understand what was happening here. I opened my eyes and stared into Edward's. I smiled.

"Thank you."

"For what?" he asked with a smirk.

"For making me feel better. I'm not usually a 'crybaby...'"

"Bella, stop putting yourself down," he said as he quirked up his eyebrow.

"Come on, let's get out of here."

"What about Alice?" I asked.

He whipped out his cell phone and tapped out a quick message to Alice and Emmett.

"Taken care of. Let's go," he said as he entwined my fingers with his.

"Where are we going?" I asked.

"It's a surprise. Come on."

**So...what do you think? Please leave a review. They make me extraordinarily happy. As happy as sneaking away with Edward to a surprise location.**

# Surprise

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

## Chapter 6: Surprise

### EPOV

She was my singer. *Il mio cantante.*

She felt so right in my arms. I didn't want to let her go. I wanted to hold her forever.

"Edward!" Jasper hissed. He looked at me pointedly and I reluctantly released Bella from our embrace. I still maintained contact by holding her hand. I indicated to Bella with a smile. She returned the smile and nodded toward the audience. She was such a professional. A natural on stage.

Bella crossed the stage and walked over to my excited sister. I chuckled inwardly at her exuberance. We continued the slower section of our set. As I played on my guitar and harmonized with Jasper, I noticed Tanya in the corner of the Chapel. She had a murderous look in her eyes, staring directly at my Bella.

*Shit! This is not going to be good.*

We finished our set with a crowd favorite, "Wanted, Dead or Alive." Jasper loved the song and we played it mainly for him. It also featured Jasper on lead vocals. He sounded more like Bon Jovi than I did.

After the song ended, I said "Thank you," and the lights faded away.

We scrambled offstage as the crowd went wild.

## La Cantante

"That went fucking awesome!" Emmett thundered.

"I totally agree!" Jasper concurred.

"It was okay," I reasoned. The two guys looked at me like I had eight heads. I'm a bit of a perfectionist with my music and there were some mistakes that were made. However, for our first performance with no rehearsal, it went well.

"Okay? Are you serious, Eddie? Okay? We fucking ROCKED!" Emmett snarled.

"There were a few places..." I began.

"Edward, we didn't rehearse. Mistakes are inevitable. Just relish in the fact that crowd fucking loved it," Jasper said calmly.

"But..."

"No, buts, Eddie-boy. We rocked. Say it!" Emmett teased.

"Fine, we rocked." I relented.

"Say it with conviction, Ed."

"WE ROCKED!" I shouted. "Happy now?"

"Yes, very," they both responded.

"I was thinking, guys, that we need another singer. Having Bella onstage solidified that idea. What do you think that we ask her to sing with us?" I asked hopefully.

"Hell, yeah! I always wanted to sing with my sister." Emmett boomed.

"Emmett, I hate to burst your bubble. But you're tone deaf. You're an awesome drummer, but you can't sing to save your life," Jasper laughed.

## La Cantante

"Fuck you, hick! I too can sing."

Emmett started singing a horrible rendition of "Wanted, Dead or Alive." Jasper and I shared a pained look. I think dogs were howling it was so bad.

"Em, stop. My ears are bleeding," I said as I covered my ears.

"You both suck."

"So, back to the possibility of Bella joining Breaking Midnight?"

"Definitely yes. Isabelly is the bomb!"

"Jasper?"

"Yep."

I did a happy dance and grinned at my bandmates/roommates. "Awesome. I'm going to go out there and tell her."

"We're going to start loading up the truck and then head back to Patterson," Emmett explained. "I may stay for a little bit, but not too much longer."

"I need to finish unpacking," Jasper affirmed. "Some of us don't live an hour from campus and run home to get something if they forgot it. I need to check to see if I have everything I need. If I don't, I got to call the parental and have it shipped."

"Got it. See you guys when I get back. It really was a great show," I said sincerely.

"Sure, sure. Later, Eddie-boy."

I rolled my eyes as I headed out to the Chapel. I searched for Bella and Alice. When I found them, my worst fears were confirmed. Tanya was in Bella's face and had her hand gripped on Bella's arm. Bella looked absolutely terrified.



## La Cantante

Alice was glaring at Tanya, but she was pointedly ignoring my sister.

"Tanya! Take your filthy hands off of her!" I roared.

Tanya turned to face me and her eyes lit up with lust.

*Ewww...she's a nasty ho. Must not hit the nasty ho.*

"Hey baby," she purred as ran her fingers up my chest before she attempted to reach my hair. I held back the bile gathering in my throat and swatted her hand away from my body.

*Does swatting count as hitting? Eh, it doesn't matter. She's still a nasty ho.*

"What did I tell you earlier, Tanya? I'm not your 'baby.' Never was, never will be. Go find some random guy to blow and leave my sister and the newest member of Breaking Midnight alone."

*Shit! I didn't want to tell Bella that she was part of the band as I was yelling at my psycho-quasi-ex-girlfriend.*

Before I could amend my statement, Tanya's face turned bright red in anger. "Fuck you, Edward! You're such an asshole!" she screamed as she slapped me across the face.

*Bitch!*

"Hit me again, Tanya. I will call the cops. Leave!" I snarled as I rubbed my cheek. That hurt like a mother.

Tanya stomped away, leaving me with Alice and Bella. Alice had her arm around Bella. Bella had this look absolute terror in her eyes. I took a small step toward her, "Bella?"

She flinched away. She looked so small, so fragile.

## La Cantante

I lowered my voice, "Bella, baby? Are you okay?"

She looked up at me with her beautiful doe eyes. They were filled with tears. She blinked and the tears fell down her flushed cheeks. *Christ, she's beautiful.*

I reached for face and began swiping the tears off her cheeks. She leaned into my touch. A small smile ghosted over my face at that reaction. She wrapped her arms around my waist and I encircled my arms around her tiny frame.

I looked at Alice and she had a look of confusion. I indicated with my head that I was taking Bella to the backstage area to get her away from the crowd. I moved slowly. I wanted to scoop Bella into my arms and hide her away from the obvious pain she was in. We got backstage and I pulled to an old couch. She clung to me like I was the last person on the planet.

"Bella, are you alright? I'm really worried, here," I said sadly.

She nodded against my chest. She pulled away and began looking around the room. She got up when she spotted a roll of paper towels. Bella began dabbing her cheeks.

She turned to face me and had a wary expression on face. I had never felt so protective over someone in all my life. I had to make sure that she was safe. It was my job.

Bella lifted her eyes and there was so much sadness there, "It's a long story, Edward. I'm not really ready to tell you or anyone else for that matter," she explained. "However, I don't react well to violence."

*Not many people do. However, what happened to you, my beautiful Bella? Let me fix it! I'll keep you safe.*

"Were you hurt? Did someone attack you?" I asked, barely containing my anger.

"Kind of."

## La Cantante

I saw red. I wanted to kill whoever hurt her. Fucking bastard!

I looked up to see Bella cowering. I probably didn't keep my thoughts from crossing my face. I softened my features and reached for her hand. I pulled her into my lap and tucked her head under my chin. I needed to hold her. I needed to protect her.

"I'm sorry, Bella." She took a deep breath and relaxed into my embrace.

We sat there for a few moments. I wanted to bury my face into her soft hair. I settled for kissing her head. The scent of strawberries, freesia and something that was inherently Bella assaulted my mind. She snuggled closer to my chest.

*So perfect.*

"Can you please not tell anybody," she asked softly. "Especially Emmett. If he knew, he'd kill Jacob."

I bristled at the name of the faceless boy who hurt my Bella. "Is Jacob the guy who...attacked you?" I asked.

She nodded, "He didn't attack me, really. More like controlled me and made feel like I was nothing."

*Fucking asshole motherfucking prick!*

"Bella," I said as I gently pulled her off my lap and placed her on the couch. I held her heart shaped face in my hands and looked at her lovingly, "You are not 'nothing.' I've known you for a few hours, but I can safely say that you are kind, genuine, talented and beautiful. This Jacob is an asshole for treating you that way."

Her eyes welled with tears. It almost appeared like she didn't believe what I said. I wanted to show her how I felt. I wanted to kiss those plump lips, but I didn't want to frighten her anymore.

## La Cantante

"Don't cry, baby." I gently rubbed circles on her cheeks and tucked a piece of hair behind her ear. I may not be able to kiss her. *Yet*. But I wanted to show her that she was special. She closed her eyes. It looked like she was trying to process what happened. I kept looking at her beautiful face. When she finally opened her eyes, she smiled.

"Thank you."

"For what?" I teased

"For making me feel better. I'm not usually a 'crybaby...'"

"Bella, stop putting yourself down," I said as I raised my eyebrow. "Come on, let's get out of here."

"What about Alice?" she squeaked.

I took out my cell phone and texted Alice.

*Pixie - Bella is upset and I'm taking her home from the party. - E*

*Take her to your usual spot. Get her to talk. I'm worried about her. - A*

*That was the plan, Pix. Don't wait up - E*

*BEHAVE EDWARD! - A*

I figured I needed to tell my roommates. I just hoped Emmett was still here. I could take Alice home.

*Em, going to get a bite to eat with Bella and discuss Breaking Midnight - E*

*This isn't a date, Edward? It better not be - Em*

*Ummm...no? - E*

## La Cantante

*You just broke up with Skankya this morning and you're flirting with my sister?  
I don't like this -Em*

*Tough. I promise I'll be a perfect gentleman - E*

*You better, or your balls are being shoved down your throat, Cullen! - Em*

*Gross, Em. Are you still at the Chapel? - E*

*Yep, want me to take YOUR sister home? - Em*

*Yes, please! I owe you - E*

*Yeah, yeah. You're still a douche. No funny business with Isabelly - Em*

*Got it. Thanks - E*

"Taken care of. Let's go," I said as I reached for hand. I entwined my fingers with hers. It felt so right.

"Where are we going?" she asked timidly.

"It's a surprise. Come on," I replied as I gently pulled her to the exit of the Chapel.

xx LC xx

I carefully deposited Bella into the passenger side of my Volvo. She was very quiet as we walked from the Chapel to my car. I jogged to the driver's side and slid into the seat. Bella had her arms crossed over her body. She was shivering.

"Are you cold?"

*Of course, she is, idiot. She's shivering.*

## La Cantante

"A little bit. The temperature really dropped since we got to the party," she chattered.

I slipped off my black leather jacket and placed it over her shoulders. She put her arms in the sleeves and her shivering quickly stopped.

"So, where are we going, Edward?"

"Well, the place I would like to take you is a little hard to find in the dark. So, instead I'm taking you to my favorite Italian restaurant. Did you eat dinner?"

"No, I didn't. I was so wrapped up in getting ready and coming to the party. I forgot to eat," she murmured.

"Baci's it is, then!" I exclaimed as I started the car. I turned on the heat. Bella was still cold. She wasn't shivering as much. It was still noticeable.

"So, Bella. What made you decide on coming to Emerson University?" I asked.

"It's been my dream. I've always known that I wanted to come here. The cost was always an issue. However, when they offered me the vocal scholarship, I was determined to come here. The school then offered me a Presidential Scholarship and that solidified my decision to come here. I've admired Dr. Eleazar Santiago is one of my favorite composers and conductors. I was ready to give my left kidney to work with him. The fact that I am and that he's going to be my advisor is mind-boggling. Sorry...I'm rambling," she said embarrassed.

"Feel free to ramble any time you want, Bella. You mentioned that you are a vocal music major. Have you signed up for classes?"

"Actually, I'm a vocal music education major. I want to be a high school choir director. But yes, I've signed up for classes. Tons and tons of music fun. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, I have music theory at 7:30 in the morning. Why so early? Ugh! I also have Introduction to Education, Psychology 1, Biology 2, Italian 1 and University Singers on those days as

## La Cantante

well. Tuesdays and Thursdays are pretty light. I just have Aural Harmony at 7:30. Again why so early? I guess they wean out the slackers quickly. I have piano and voice lessons on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I'm also taking U.S. History. Thursday evenings I have rehearsal for Emerson Express."

"Okay, Bella. We have a ton more classes together than I originally thought. I'm also in music theory and aural harmony, University Singers, U.S. History and I'm in Emerson Express as well. You're going to get sick of me," I chortled.

"I doubt it," she responded so quietly. It almost seemed like she didn't want me to hear it. A smile ghosted over her lips.

"Okay, Edward," Bella said more clearly, "What's this I hear about me joining Breaking Midnight? I want to make sure that I'm not losing my mind."

I guffawed nervously. "Yeah, sorry about that."

"It's okay. I understand," she said quickly looking at her hands.

"You understand what?" I asked.

"That you don't want me to sing with you. I get it."

"No, Bella! We do want you to sing with us. I just didn't want to blurt it out like I did in front Skankya," I clarified.

"Skankya? Totally appropriate nickname. She seems like a ho," Bella laughed.

"She is. The biggest one, ever," I said with a grimace. "We're here."

I pulled into a parking spot and hopped out of the car. I went to the passenger side to open the door for Bella but she had already gotten out. I tried to hide my disappointment.

"What's with the pout, Edward?"

## La Cantante

"I wanted to be a gentleman and open the door for you. You're too fast."

"Ha! Yeah, right! I'm surprised I didn't fall as I got out of the car."

I rolled my eyes and reached for her hand. I again laced my fingers with hers and headed to the restaurant. I made sure to open the door for her as we entered. We strolled to the hostess station.

"Good evening. I'm Lauren. Welcome to Baci's. Table for two?" the blonde-haired hostess asked as she batted her eyelashes toward me.

*What's the deal with restaurant personnel flirting with me today? I'm OBVIOUSLY holding a girl's hand. I'm not available. Christ!*

"Yeah, that would be great," I responded uncomfortably.

Lauren led us to table in the middle of the dining room.

"Can we go somewhere more private, Lauren?" I said with a crooked smile.

*Might as well try to flirt to get a private location. I want Bella all to myself.*

"Sure, this way."

She led us to a secluded booth in the corner of the restaurant. *Perfect!*

"Enjoy your meals," she said sweetly as she turned away.

"Does that happen often?" Bella asked.

"What happen often?" I asked. *Play dumb, Cullen!*

"Girls throwing themselves at you? I think she has to go change her panties after the smile you gave her," Bella said with a coy smile.



## La Cantante

"Ah, no. There's only one girl that I'm interested in, right now. It's not Lauren, I-think-I-have-something-eye, hostess girl."

"Why not, she's pretty." Bella reasoned, not looking me in the eyes.

"She doesn't hold a candle to you, Bella."

Bella's eyes shot up in disbelief at what I said. I really didn't want to lay my feelings out so quickly, but why hide them. She continued to gaze at me warily as our waitress came up to ask for our drink orders. The waitress scuttled away. Bella and I continued to stare at each other.

"What do you mean by that, Edward?"

"Exactly what you might think. I know that we don't know each other very well, but I think that you are absolutely perfect. You're sweet, beautiful, and extraordinarily talented and I would love to get to know you much, MUCH better, Bella." I said as I reached across the table to grasp her hand.

"Wow," she whispered.

"Do you feel that, Bella? That energy?"

"I thought I was the only one who felt it."

"I can't describe it but I need it. I want more of that feeling," I said fervently.

"Me too," she said with the same passion. "I do have a question for you, though."

"Ask me anything," I said with a crooked smile.

"*Il suo cantante?*"

I laughed and ran my hand through my hair. "It's stupid, really. My mom and I used to sing all of the time. She taught me how to play the piano and how to

## La Cantante

sing. She called me her singer. *Il suo cantante*. I've been trying to find someone to fill that void in my life after my mom died. I felt that void get filled tonight when I was performing with you. *Lei è il mio cantante*."

"That's not stupid, Edward. That's beautiful. I'm glad that I was able to fulfill whatever you were missing."

Bella and I stared into each other's eyes. I felt like I was home for the first time since my mother's death, since my father abandoned me. I never felt such strong emotions in my life.

*I'm falling in love with Bella Swan.*

"Are you ready to order?" the waitress asked, breaking the spell.

"Um, I'll have the mushroom ravioli," I said brusquely.

"I'll have the same," Bella said just as tersely.

"Great. I'll put those right in. Can I get you anything else?"

"No, thank you." I said. I gazed at Bella and quirked an eyebrow. "I have a question for you, Ms. Swan."

"Ask away, Mr. Cullen," she giggled.

"Emerson Express?"

"I know! How can I be in a show choir when I can't really walk on a flat surface? Easy! I can learn choreography fairly quickly. If I KNOW where my feet are supposed to be, I'm good. I was in show choir in high school. Definitely not for my dancing skills. I was the 'token voice.'"

"I definitely agree in the voice aspect. Your voice is amazing. So much power for such a tiny thing."

## La Cantante

"So, what's your major, Edward? You know my life story, almost and I know next to nothing about you except you are Alice's sister, you play in a band and you have a Volvo," Bella smirked. "A Volvo? Really, Edward?"

"Don't knock the Volvo. It's fucking awesome," I said, rolling my eyes.

"Soccer Mom," Bella giggled.

"Take that back, Swan," I said tossing a chunk of bread towards her.

"Nope. Major?"

"Ugh, pre-med."

"Try not to sound so enthused there, Edward."

"I'm only a pre-med major because of Carlisle, my adoptive father. He's an oncologist. He's a wonderful man. I love and respect him very much. He doesn't really believe that being a musician is a lucrative career choice. I decided to follow in his footsteps. I am a music minor. I decided that over the summer. This is why I'm taking music theory and aural harmony this year. Carlisle gets his major and I get my minor. Seems like a fair trade."

"Have you talked to your dad about this?" Bella asked.

"At length. This was the best compromise we could come up with. It doesn't mean that I'm going to stop loving music and performing. I've created demos in the recording studio at Emerson. I've sent a few out and we'll see if I get a few nibbles," I said with a hopeful smile.

As I finished my diatribe about my love of music and hatred of medicine, the food arrived. Bella and I tucked into our food. I wasn't really all that hungry. Bella, on the other hand, nearly licked her bowl clean.

"I think you missed a spot. Why don't you lick the bowl, Bella?"

## La Cantante

"Shut it, Cullen. I haven't really eaten anything since breakfast. This is really good."

"I definitely like a girl who can eat," I teased.

"What's that supposed to mean? Are you saying I'm fat?" Bella said with fire in her eyes.

"Absolutely not. I've been on dates where girls ordered salad and would a leaf of lettuce and proclaim they are full. That's so not healthy," I articulated.

"So, is this a date, Edward?"

"I hope so. The first of many, Bella."

Bella's cheeks were tinted pink with her blush. She lowered eyes and bit her lip.

*I want to bite that lip. What?*

"Shall we go?" I asked, motioning for the check.

Bella nodded and the waitress appeared with the check. I tucked the money into the black folder and handed it back to her. "No change, please."

I slid out of the booth and helped Bella out as well. As she stood, she stumbled over her feet and fell into my arms. Her hair tumbled over her face. I gently pushed away the mahogany locks from her forehead and tucked them behind her ear. I traced my fingers down her jaw. Her eyes closed and she again leaned into my touch. She quickly righted herself after a brief moment and grabbed my hand.

We exited the restaurant with a parting sneer from Lauren. We ambled to the car. When we got to the Volvo, I paused before I opened her door. I tentatively reached up to her face.

"Bella..."

"Yes, Edward," she breathed.

"Can I kiss you?" I asked uncertainly.

Her eyes widened in surprise. "Umm..."

"I'm sorry, Bella. I was very presumptuous..."

The next thing that happened surprised the hell out of me. She gently reached up for my face and pulled me down to her pink lips. She gently caressed her lips to mine. It was like an angel's kiss. Soft, sweet and perfect. She pulled away with a questioning look on her face.

I wrapped her in an embrace and brushed my lips against hers. I deepened the kiss and nibbled on her lower lip. Bella moaned into my mouth and fisted her hands into my hair. We kissed until we were out of breath. I rested my forehead against hers and whispered, "*Il mio cantante.*"

**The kissed! SQUEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE! Reviews are almost as good as a heavy make out session with Edward. Please leave your thoughts!**

**Hugs!**

# Was it a Dream?

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

## Chapter 7: Was it a Dream?

### BPOV

Is this happening? Am I walking hand in hand with Edward to his car? This is unbelievable. Is this a dream? I surreptitiously pinched myself and it hurt. A lot. Definitely not a dream. Shit.

Why is he being so nice?

We reached Edward's car. It was a sleek, silver Volvo. *Nice ride.* He helped me into the passenger seat of the car. I was shaking like a leaf. It was flipping cold. It had dropped at least ten degrees since we left for the party at the Chapel. Edward slid into the driver's seat and looked at me. My teeth were chattering.

"Are you cold?"

*No, I'm chattering my teeth for the fun of it. I do it for shits and giggles.*

"A little bit. The temperature really dropped since we got to the party."

He slipped off his black leather jacket and placed it over my shoulders. I inhaled deeply and was assaulted by the most wonderful scent. His jacket smelled of leather, his cologne and something that was purely Edward. I slipped my arms into the jacket and felt protected. I quickly stopped shivering. I was still cold, but I felt safe.

"So, where are we going, Edward?" I asked.

"Well, the place I would like to take you is a little hard to find in the dark. So,

## La Cantante

instead I'm taking you to my favorite Italian restaurant. Did you eat dinner?"

"No, I didn't. I was so wrapped up in getting ready and coming to the party. I forgot to eat," I murmured.

Edward furrowed his brows before he gave me a crooked smile, "Baci's it is, then!"

He started the car and turned on the heat. He checked his blind spot and deftly pulled his car out into traffic.

"So, Bella. What made you decide on coming to Emerson University?"

"It's been my dream. I've always known that I wanted to come here. The cost was always an issue. However, when they offered me the vocal scholarship, I was determined to come here. The school then offered me a Presidential Scholarship and that solidified my decision to come here. I've admired Dr. Eleazar Santiago for a long time. He's one of my favorite composers and conductors. I was ready to give my left kidney to work with him. The fact that I am and that he's going to be my advisor is mind boggling," I gushed. "Sorry...I'm rambling."

"Feel free to ramble any time you want, Bella. You mentioned that you are a vocal music major. Have you signed up for classes?"

I rattled off my insane schedule to Edward as he drove through the small town that housed Emerson University. As I mentioned several classes, he smirked. Edward mentioned that we were going to share several classes together. I was absolutely giddy with the possibilities. He mentioned that I may get sick of him. I certainly hope not. He's one of the most interesting people I had ever met. He was also one of the most caring.

"Okay, Edward. What's this I hear about me joining Breaking Midnight? I want to make sure I'm not losing my mind."

Edward laughed nervously. *Shit. He didn't mean it.*

## La Cantante

"Yeah, sorry about that."

*Don't get your hopes up, Swan.*

"It's okay. I understand," I replied as I looked at my hands.

"You understand what?" he asked with a frown.

"That you don't want me to sing with you. I get it."

"No, Bella! We do want you sing with us. I just didn't want to blurt it out like that in front of Skankya," he clarified.

*He does want me sing with him!*

"Skanya? Totally appropriate nickname. She seems like a ho."

"She is. The biggest one, ever," Edward said with a look of disappointment.

*They were together. Fuck.*

"We're here."

xx LC xx

Edward and I teased and had a wonderful dinner. He was so attentive and sweet. *So, unlike Jacob.*

When we entered the restaurant, Baci's, the hostess was so blatantly flirting with Edward. He seemed annoyed at her behavior. I asked him if he noticed it. I called the waitress pretty and then he gave me the greatest compliment I had ever heard in my life.

"She doesn't hold a candle to you, Bella."



## La Cantante

*Wait, what? Is he calling me beautiful? Nu-uh. There is no way that this gorgeous man is interested in me.*

"What do you mean, Edward?"

"Exactly what you might think, I know that we don't know each other very well, but I think that you are absolutely perfect. You're sweet, beautiful and extraordinarily talented and I would love to get to know you much, MUCH better, Bella," he said as he grasped my hand.

As he touched my hand, electricity flowed between my fingers. It was surreal this feeling that a single touch can cause. My heart fluttered. My breath quickened. I needed more his touch.

"Wow."

"Do you feel that, Bella? That energy?"

"I thought I was the only one who felt it," I said with disbelief. *He felt it, too!*

"I can't describe it but I need it. I want more of that feeling," he confessed passionately.

"Me too. I do have a question for you, though."

"Ask me anything," he replied with a crooked smile.

"*Il suo cantante?*"

He anxiously ran his hand through his bronze locks, "It's stupid, really. My mom and I used to sing all of the time. She taught me how to play the piano and how to sing. She called me her singer. *Il suo cantante*. I've been trying to find someone to fill that void in my life after my mom died. I felt that void get filled tonight when I was performing with you. *Lei è il mio cantante.*"

## La Cantante

*Holy shit! Is he serious? That is the most beautiful thing I had ever heard. I think I'm falling in love with Edward Cullen.*

"That's not stupid, Edward. That's beautiful. I'm glad that I was able to fulfill whatever you were missing."

We stared into each other's eyes. His green eyes bore into my soul. Was he my soul mate? Was I placed on this earth to be with Edward Cullen and make beautiful music? Never before had I felt the depth of emotion for one person. Not even toward my parents or Jacob.

We were pulled from our reverie by our waitress asking for our order. After she left, Edward teased me about being in Emerson Express, the university's show choir. I explained that I can do choreography. If my feet know where to go, they won't be fumbled over.

We teased and bantered back and forth for the remainder of our dinner. I never felt so comfortable with anyone in such a short amount of time. He was smart, funny, and incredibly good looking. I truly wanted to get to know Edward Cullen much better.

Edward asked for the bill and we got ready to leave. I stumbled over my own feet as I got up out of the booth. Edward graciously caught me. *Oh, he smells so good.*

He lightly brushed my hair off of my face and gently traced my jaw. *Kiss me, please!*

I looked up at him and managed to right myself without hurting him. I laced my fingers with his and walked out of the restaurant. The hostess, Lauren, sneered at us as we left.

*He's mine, bitch! Back off!*

Edward placed his arm around my waist as we walked to his car. When we reached the passenger door. He paused and gently touched my face.

"Bella..."

"Yes, Edward?"

His features were pulled into a look of uncertainty. "Can I kiss you?"

*Wow, I didn't expect that! Yes, please. Kiss me! Kiss me EVERYWHERE...*

"Umm..." *Intelligent, Swan.*

"I'm sorry, Bella. I was very presumptuous..."

*I can't believe I'm doing this! Holy shit!*

I reached up to his handsome face and gently pulled it down to my lips. I stood on my tip toes to brush my lips against his. My heart stammered and butterflies were attacking my stomach. Our lips had a spark and it ignited something in my body that I had never felt before. I pulled away, afraid that I did something wrong.

Edward's eyes were darkened with adoration and a touch of lust. He snaked his arms around my waist and molded body to his. He ducked his head and caressed my lips with his. He deepened the kiss as he lightly nibbled on my lower lip. His tongue slowly entered my mouth and I moaned in response. My body was like a livewire. We kissed until we needed to breathe. *Oxygen is so overrated. I'll kiss Edward any day!*

He rested his forehead against mine and whispered, " *Il mio cantante.*"

Was this truly a dream? I certainly hope not because I never want to wake up.

**This chapter is pretty short. I wanted to get Bella's view point on the kiss. The story will pick up the pace in the next chapter. I have it planned in my head. I just need to put pen to paper. Reviews make me write faster and happy like when Edward speaks Italian.**

## La Cantante

### **Translations:**

*Il suo cantante* - Her singer

*Lei è il mio cantante* - You're my singer

*Il mio cantante* - My singer

# Inquisition

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

## Chapter 8: Inquisition

### BPOV

Edward reluctantly released me from his hold and opened up the passenger door. I slid in as Edward jogged around the front of the car and slipped into the driver's seat. He turned to me and gave me a crooked smile.

*He's so pretty.*

He started the car and backed out of the parking spot. After he placed the car into gear, Edward grabbed my hand and intertwined our fingers. He all-to-quickly returned to campus and pulled into parking lot behind Patterson Hall. We sat in his car as it idled. As we were sitting there in a comfortable, his face fell into a frown.

"I don't want tonight to end," he said quietly. "Other than the Tanya debacle, it's been perfect."

"I don't want it to end either, Edward," I replied as I squeezed his large hand. "Unfortunately, you are rooming with my big oaf of a brother and I'm rooming with your pixie sister."

"Shit."

"We'll see each other tomorrow," I said, glancing at the clock.

*Holy Crow! It's 2:30?*

"Erm....later today, I mean," I joked.

## La Cantante

Edward laughed at my lame joke. He pulled our joined hands to his lips and gently kissed each of my knuckles.

"I fully intend to see you...later today. On Monday, do you want to walk to music theory together?" he asked as he rubbed my hand along his jaw line.

*Cannot form coherent thoughts. This man is going to turn me into a puddle of goo.*

I nodded. I'm certain I had a glazed over look in my eyes. I was just dazzled by his presence and the small motion of rubbing his jaw turned my brain to mush.

"Fantastic. Let's head up to the rooms. I don't know about you, but I'm tired."

"Now that you mention it, I whipped. My body is still on Washington time," I yawned.

He placed one more gentle kiss to my hand and then reached across the console of the car and brushed his lips against mine. He disentangled our hands and opened the door. He moved inhumanly fast to open my car door. When he opened it, I slipped the jacket off of my shoulders that he gave me earlier. I passed it to him.

"Thank you for letting me borrow your jacket."

"Keep it. I like it when you wear my clothes," he said with a smirk.

"Ummm, ooooookay?" I questioned. I yawned again.

"You...need...to...sleep," he said as he kissed me in between each word.

*Definitely a puddle of goo.*

I nodded mutely and we headed into Patterson. He swiped us into the dorm and walked me to my room. I went to unlock the door and turned my body to face him. He gently brushed my hair away from my face and traced soothing circles

## La Cantante

on my cheeks. I pressed my cheek into his hand. I then reached up and grabbed one of his large hands and placed a kiss in the palm. He then traced my jaw and tilted my chin up. He kissed me three times on my lips and brushed small kisses along my jaw to a sensitive spot behind my ear. He nuzzled my neck and smiled into my hair.

This moment seemed so intimate. I never wanted it to end. Unfortunately, all good things...

Edward pulled away with a smirk, "Something to dream about, my beautiful Isabella. Goodnight."

I unlocked the door, "Goodnight, Edward."

He brushed my cheek one last time before he turned to head up to his room. I gave a small wave at his retreating form.

I clicked the door shut and huffed out a breath. I looked around my room. It was quiet. I could hear both Alice and Rosalie sleeping. They had left on a small lamp on my desk. I took off Edward's jacket and placed on the desk chair. I walked over to my bed and grabbed my pajamas and toiletry bag. I skipped to bathroom and hastily went through my nightly routine. I climbed into my bed and lay down on my pillow. My mind was going a million miles a minute. I shuffled to my desk and took a deep breath of the jacket that was on the chair. It calmed me and I smiled into the soft leather.

I went back into my bed. I closed my eyes and I dreamt about Edward Cullen.

xx LC xx

*Why is the bed shaking? We're not having an earthquake? What the hell!*

I squinted my eyes open and found the reason for the shaking bed. Alice was bouncing on her knees on the corner of my bed. Her eyes twinkled expectantly.

## La Cantante

"Too early for your energy, Ali," I grumbled as I covered my face with my quilt. "Let me go back to sleep."

"I let you sleep as long as I could," she pealed.

"What time is it?" I asked as I poked my head out from covers.

"10 in the morning. Come on! I need details. Even Rose is chomping at the bit!"

I eyed my little roommate speculatively. I then turned to look at Rosalie and she had a look of curiosity.

"Before I spill any details, I need to shower and I need caffeine. Then you ask me as many questions as you want. Jeez!" I said as I clambered out of my bed.

"Okay, you shower and address that haystack on your head. We'll get dressed to head down to the cafeteria," Alice teased.

"Thanks," I mumbled as gathered my toiletries and clothes. I rushed through my shower routine. I pulled my damp hair into a messy bun. I looked at my face and smiled at the vision. I looked alive. My eyes, though, were a different story.

"Shit!" I yelled.

"What, Bella?" Rosalie asked as she poked her head in the bathroom.

"I fell asleep with my contacts in and my eyes are all jacked up. Can you hand me my glasses? They are in the top right drawer of my desk."

"Sure thing, Bella," she said with a warm smile.

I took out my contacts and tossed them in the garbage. I needed to start a new packet this month, anyway. I can wear my glasses for a few days until my eyes calm down. Rose returned with my glasses and I slipped them on my face. I



## La Cantante

finished getting ready and put on a bit of lip gloss before heading back into our room.

Alice was on the computer and Rose was listening to her iPod. I took my clothes and towels and put them into the hamper in my closet. I snatched a pair of socks and chucks.

"Ready. Let's get some grub," I said as I tied my shoelaces.

"You may want to bring your jacket, Bella. It's a bit cold today," Alice said with a smirk.

"Ooookay," I replied as I went to my closet to grab a fleece.

"Not that one. How about the one draped over your chair?" she said sweetly.

I turned and glared at her. She glared back with pursed lips. I went back into my closet and grabbed a fleece.

"Come on, Pixie."

Rose was giggling at our interaction. She shook her head and slipped on her shoes. She also grabbed a fleece and we headed to the cafeteria.

We entered the cafeteria and scanned our cards to get our food. We loaded up our trays with the usual breakfast fare and headed to sit down at one of the tables. We tucked into our food.

As we ate breakfast, we shared a bit more information about each other. Rose was a sophomore transfer student from Northwestern University. She grew up in New York City. She's single and plans to stay that way. *Her words, not mine*. She also informed us that she was a part of the University Singers. She'll be singing alto. She has an on-campus job at the library as part of the work share program. When we asked why she transferred from Northwestern, she bristled and got quiet. I got the hint that she didn't want to talk about it. Alice persisted in her questions until I elbowed her in the ribs. She finally stopped.

## La Cantante

Alice is a freshman, like me. She lived in Chicago before she moved in with the Cullens. She also is a part of University Singers. She'll be a first soprano with me. She shared some funny stories with growing up with Edward. She also told Rose about her adoption. Rose's eyes glistened as Alice shared her story.

"So, Bella. You heard our stories. What's yours?" Rosalie asked.

"Well, I was born in Forks, Washington. It's a small town four hours from Seattle. It's cold, rainy and green. When I was five, my parents divorced. I went to live with my mom in Phoenix and Emmett stayed with my dad. At age fourteen, my mom got remarried to a minor league baseball player, Phil Dwyer. He traveled around a lot. It made it very hard for me to keep up with my studies. I asked my mom if I could move back with my dad and she reluctantly agreed. I moved back to Forks the summer before my freshman year. I was the epitome of choir nerd in high school. I kept to myself for the most part. My only friends were in the choir and my choir director.

"I came here because I wanted to become a choir director. This is one of best schools for Music Education. I also admire Dr. Eleazar Santiago. We sang a beautiful arrangement of 'Set Me As a Seal' by him for our graduation song. So that's me," I said simply.

The girls nodded. We began loading up our trays and headed out of the cafeteria. As we were exiting, Emmett, Jasper and Edward were sauntering in.

"Isabelly!" Emmett cried as he grabbed my head and gave me a noogie. I elbowed him, probably giving myself a bruise.

"Jack ass, it's BELLA! When will you learn?" I griped.

"Did ya'll eat?" Jasper twanged.

"Yeah, we just finished. We can hang out with you, if that's okay?" Alice said excitedly. She was bouncing on toes and undressing Jasper with her eyes.

## La Cantante

"Sweet!" Emmett yelled.

"Inside voice, Em," Edward teased. "I like your glasses, Isabella," he whispered to me as he grazed his hand against mine.

"Ummm, I think I'm just going to head back to the room," Rosalie muttered.

"Rose! Stay! Please?" Alice pleaded.

Rose was torn. "Fine," she replied as she linked arms with me. "Let's go get a table, Bella. See you guys in a bit."

Rose and I walked back into the cafeteria and reclaimed the table that we were sitting at earlier. She made a point to sit next to me. She shot furtive glances around the cafeteria as we waited for the guys and Alice.

"Rose, I'm confused. Is everything alright?" I asked delicately.

A look of panic grew in Rose's eyes. "Not really, Bella," she said quietly.

"Is there anything I can do? You seem almost scared of the guys," I said with concern.

"Just sit next to me. I am a bit afraid of men. I'll tell you and Alice when we get back into the room. There's more to my story. However, now is not the time or place," she said quietly.

"Got it, Rose," I said with a smile.

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Edward striding to our table. He captured my eyes with his and gave me a crooked smirk.

"He's got it bad for you, Bella," Rose whispered.

"The feeling's mutual."

## La Cantante

Edward put his tray down and sat next to me. He gave me a wide smile as he reached under the table to grab my knee. He then turned his attention to Rosalie, "I don't think that we were introduced yesterday. I'm Edward. Alice's brother," he said as he reached a hand to Rosalie.

Rosalie eyed speculatively before she returned the handshake. "Nice to meet you, Edward. I'm Rosalie."

"I hear you transferred to here from Northwestern. Great school! Why'd you switch?" he asked as he shoveled eggs into his mouth.

"A lot of reasons. The main one is I wanted to be closer to home," she said quietly.

"I understand that. Alice and I live about hour from here. I wanted to go to school further away, but my parents didn't like the idea," he said with a crooked grin.

As Rose and Edward were talking, Alice, Jasper and Emmett had sat down at the table. Alice and Jasper were having their own conversation. Emmett was doing his impression of a pig.

"Jeez, Em! Have enough food?" I gasped.

"What? This is nothing! I'm a growing boy!" he boomed with his mouth full of pancakes.

"You could feed an entire third world country with the amount of food you have on your tray," Edward teased.

Emmett shrugged and continued spoon in massive amounts of food into his mouth.

*Please excuse my brother. He was raised by a pack of wolves.*

## La Cantante

"Bella? Are you excited about joining Breaking Midnight?" Jasper asked as he tore his eyes away from Alice.

"Definitely! However, before we continue this conversation. I'm going to run get another cup of coffee. Excuse me," I said.

I walked back to the food line and got a paper cup of coffee. I was making it to my tastes when I felt a pair of arms reach around my waist.

"I missed you, Bella," Edward breathed as he nuzzled my hair.

"I missed you too, Edward. However, you may want to back off the public displays of affection. My brother has a bit of a temper. I like you too much to have my brother kill you," I sniggered.

"Damn," he whined as he tightened his hold on my waist. He kissed and nibbled along the column of my neck before releasing me. "As nice as that was, I was curious if you wanted to come to the music building and rehearse some pieces for Breaking Midnight. We don't have a lot music for a female vocalist since we never had one before. I would like your input before we rehearsed with the band. We go out for dinner afterward."

"Hmmm...let me think?" I joked. "Okay. What time?"

"About 6?"

"Great. Do you need me to bring anything?"

"How about a list of songs you'd like the band to sing or songs that you like?" He said as he kissed my cheek. "I really like the glasses. I have a sexy librarian fantasy going through my head right now, Bella."

*Wow. That's hot.*

I blushed and bit my lip.

## La Cantante

"I want to bite that lip, Isabella," he said as he pulled my lip from my teeth and lightly kissed me. "We better head back before Emmett finds us and kills me."

I nodded dumbly and started walking back to the table.

"Are you forgetting something, Bella?"

"Huh?" I asked as I turned back to Edward.

He held my coffee as he laughed. I rolled my eyes as I swiped the cup from him. We walked back to the table.

"That was an awful long time to get coffee, Isabelly," Emmett said with a scowl.

"It was out and I had to wait until a new batch was ready. Jeez, Emmett."

"Breaking Midnight?" Jasper asked.

"I'm very excited. As I was waiting for my coffee, Edward and I were discussing song options. We're going to meet tonight to brainstorm some music ideas for the band."

Emmett's brow furrowed and he got a dangerous look in his eyes. Edward and I may need to talk to him sooner rather than later about this blossoming relationship. I took a sidelong glance at Edward. He nodded imperceptibly and appeared he was in agreement with me. We'll add that to our "rehearsal" this evening.

We continued to chat like we were friends for the longest of time. Rosalie slowly came out her shell. She was still guarded but she didn't have a look of fear in her eyes that she had earlier. Alice and Jasper were getting closer, both literally and figuratively. Edward rolled his eyes at his sister and roommate. Emmett gave Edward the stink eye for the rest of breakfast. It was actually quite humorous.

## La Cantante

The guys finished their breakfast and we walked back to Patterson together. Before we split up to head to our respective floors, Edward pulled me aside.

"Do you have your phone on you?" he asked.

"Yeah."

"Let me have it. I want to program my number on there," he explained as I handed him phone. He tapped in his number. He then called his phone. I heard it shrill from the pocket of his jeans. He handed my phone back to me and gave me a wink before he headed up the stairs to his room.

I walked back to my room with a spring in my step. As I entered my room, I felt my phone buzz in my hand.

*Just making sure this works. You looked adorable today. Wear the glasses more often. Very sexy - E*

*A glasses fetish? Really, Edward? - B*

*Yes, please ;) - E*

*I thought I was a dork. - B*

*You're my dork - E*

*\*Rolls eyes\* - B*

*Be ready at 6, baby - E*

*Looking forward to it - B*

I walked to my desk and plugged in my phone to charge. I sat down on my bed with my laptop to peruse music for possibilities for songs for Breaking Midnight. Before I got too involved in my project, Alice and Rose breezed in and the inquisition began.

## La Cantante

"We were patient, Bella. You need to spill the details. Now!" Alice demanded. "Did you plan to have the guys walk in when they did? It just delayed the inevitable."

"No, Alice. That was totally not planned. Okay, so details..." I sighed.

I told them what happened after situation with Tanya and how Edward took care of me. They shared a swoony glance at each other when I told them about how I was Edward's "singer." After I told them that we kissed, Alice screamed so loudly.

"Jeez, Alice. I don't think the dogs in the entire county heard you. Could you be any louder?" I chuckled.

"You're it for him. I just know it. I have a feeling. My feelings are usually accurate. My family learns to never bet against me. A sixth sense, if you will," Alice said as she wave her hand dismissively.

"He seems like a gentleman, Bella. Please be careful, though," Rose said thoughtfully.

"He does seem almost perfect," I sighed.

"Almost?" Alice asked with her eyebrows raised.

"No man is perfect," I murmured.

"Definitely," Rose agreed quietly.

At that point in time, I came to the realization that Rose and I had more in common than originally thought.

"Rose, what happened to you?"

xx LC xx



**EPOV**

After I dropped Bella off at her dorm room. I floated back to mine. I had never felt so happy. I unlocked my room to find Jasper and Emmett snoring in harmony.

*Ah! The joys of living in a triple with two other guys. Is it too late to get an off campus apartment? Maybe Bella can move in with me.*

I shook my head at the sounds coming from my roommates. I stripped off my clothes and unceremoniously dumped them by my desk. I climbed into my bed and got under the covers. I wished that Bella was in my bed with me. I settled on dreaming about her. As I closed my eyes, my imagination worked overtime in recreating the beauty that was inherently Bella. As I slept, my dreams were filled of chestnut hair, bright brown eyes and a beautiful voice.

*Il mio cantante.*

xx LC xx

"YO! Eddie-boy! Wake up, sleeping beauty!" Emmett thundered as he whipped off my covers off of my body.

"Dude, Emmett! What the fuck?" I barked as I tore the sheets from my large roommate. I glared at him as he turned and laughed at me.

Ass.

"I'm hungry. Let's head down to the cafeteria. My stomach is about to eat itself," Emmett whined.

"Go down with Jasper. I didn't get until late. I would like to sleep some more, jackass."

"Jasper is showering. After he's done, why don't you grab one and we can head down together. But make it snappy," he laughed.

## La Cantante

As he was talking, Jasper walked out of the bathroom and nodded to me. I rolled my eyes and I grabbed my stuff to get ready. I hopped in the shower and briefly hosed off. I did a cursory hair wash and scrubbed my body. I exited the shower and brushed my teeth.

I walked out into the room and grabbed some clothes. I pulled on a pair of dark jeans, an Emerson T-shirt and random fleece. I slipped on my Chucks and bowed towards the door, "Let's go, pig."

"FOOD!"

*My roommate is an idiot.*

Jasper, Emmett and I walked to the cafeteria. As we were entering, Alice, Rosalie and Bella were heading out.

"Isabelly!" Emmett yelled as he gave her a noogie. She elbowed him and struggled to get out his hold. She had on the cutest glasses and her hair was pulled away from her face in a messy bun. Something about a girl in glasses really turns me on.

*Bella is my dream girl.*

"Jack ass, it's BELLA. When will you learn?" she griped. Emmett just smirked at his sister.

"Did ya'll eat?" Jasper asked.

"Yeah, we just finished. We can hang out with you, if that's okay?" Alice asked with a sparkle in her eyes. She was totally flirting with Jasper.

"Sweet!" Emmett boomed.

"Inside voice, Em," I taunted. Emmett turned to head into the cafeteria. I snuck up behind Bella and whispered in her ear, "I like your glasses," as I brushed my hand against hers.

## La Cantante

"Ummm, I think I'm just going to head back to the room," Rose mumbled.

Emmett whipped around with a look of surprise on his face.

*Emmett likes Rosalie. Interesting...*

"Rose! Stay! Please?" Alice pleaded.

*Yes, please stay and distract the big oaf.*

"Fine," she relented. "Let's go get a table, Bella. See you guys in a bit."

Rose and Bella linked arms and headed back into the cafeteria. Alice and Jasper were talking quietly as they headed into the cafeteria. I followed them and Emmett was behind me. We swiped our cards to get our meals. Emmett sprinted to the buffet that was serving breakfast. He grabbed one of each item on the buffet line. I laughed as I grabbed some pancakes, eggs and some bacon. I got some water and coffee and headed to the table. I saw Bella and Rose huddled in deep conversation. Rose seemed troubled and Bella appeared to comfort her.

*She's so compassionate...and mine.*

I gave Bella a signature crooked grin. Her face lit up with a huge smile. I took my tray and sat next down to my girl. I reached under the table and lightly grabbed her knee.

"I don't think that we were introduced yesterday. I'm Edward. Alice's brother," I said lightly as extended my hand to Rosalie.

She seemed hesitant to shake my hand, but tentatively did so, "Nice to meet you, Edward. I'm Rosalie."

"I hear you transferred to here from Northwestern. Great school! Why'd you switch?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"A lot of reasons. The main one is I wanted to be closer to home," she muttered.

"I understand that. Alice and I live about an hour from here. I wanted to go to school further away, but my parents didn't like that idea."

While we were chatting, the others came to join us. Emmett was shoveling food into his mouth.

*That boy is a human garbage disposal. Jeez!*

Jasper asked Bella about Breaking Midnight. Her eyes lit up behind those glasses. She looked genuinely excited. Before talking about the band, she excused herself to get some coffee.

*Yes! I can talk to her without Emmett breathing down my throat.*

I got up and indicated that I was doing the same and ran to catch with Bella. She was standing by the coffee station with her back to me. I put my mug down and placed my arms around her waist and nuzzled her still damp hair.

"I missed you, Bella," I muttered.

"I missed you too, Edward," she said as she lightly touched my hands around her waist. "However, you may want to back off the public displays of affection. My brother has a bit of a temper. I like you too much have my brother kill you."

*She likes me! She really likes me!*

"Damn," I whined as I tightened my hold on her waist. I lightly kissed and nibbled along her neck. She smells so good. If I could bottle this scent, I'd be a millionaire. "As nice as that was, I was curious if you wanted to come to the music building and rehearse some pieces for Breaking Midnight. We don't have a lot of music for a female vocalist since we never had one before. I would like your input before we rehearsed with band. We go out for dinner afterward."

## La Cantante

"Hmmm...let me think?"

*What? Don't leave me hanging, Swan!*

"Okay. What time?" she said with a twinkle.

*Tease.*

"About 6?"

"Great. Do you need me to bring anything?" she asked with a cute little furrow between her brows.

"How about a list a songs you'd like the band to sing or songs that you like?" I replied as I kissed her cheek. "I really like the glasses. I have a sexy librarian fantasy going through my head right now, Bella."

*Okay my brain to mouth filter is not functioning this morning. Why the hell did I say that?*

Bella blushed and bit lip. "I want to bite that lip, Isabella," I lightly growled as I pulled her lip from her teeth and kissed her.

*Filter, dammit!*

"We better head back before Emmett finds us and kills me."

She nodded and we walked back to the table. Emmett made some snide comment about Bella taking forever to get her coffee, but he was glaring at me. Bella gave me a glance with worried look in her eyes. I nodded at her, indicating that we need to talk to Emmett.

We finished our breakfast. Emmett was giving me the hairy eyeball the rest of the time. I chuckled at Alice and Jasper. They were lost in their own little world. They actually made a cute couple. His calming nature would be a counter to Alice's enthusiasm. Rosalie even became more comfortable with us.

## La Cantante

She still seemed hesitant to talk but at least she didn't run off during breakfast.

We walked back to the dorm together. We were about to split off to head off to our respective rooms. I pulled Bella aside and we exchanged cell phone numbers. When I got back to my room, I sent her a few texts.

*Six o'clock cannot come fast enough.*

**I'm looking for suggestions for music. If you have a song that may work well with the story, please send me a PM or leave it in the review section. Thanks and hugs!**

# Confessions

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them. I'm also looking for songs that would work for the story. Please leave a review or PM me if you have suggestions.*

*This chapter has description of a sexual assault. It's rated M for a reason. If you can't buy cigarettes, don't read this!*

## Chapter 9: Confessions

### BPOV

"He seems like a gentleman, Bella. Please be careful, though," Rose said thoughtfully.

"He does seem almost perfect," I sighed.

"Almost?" Alice asked with her eyebrows raised.

"No man is perfect," I murmured.

"Definitely," Rose agreed quietly.

At that point in time, I came to the realization that Rose and I had more in common than originally thought.

"Rose, what happened to you?"

Rosalie closed her eyes and pinched the bridge of her nose. When her eyes opened, there was so much pain and sadness. She slowly walked to her bed. She gathered her knees to her body and she laid her head on top of them.

"I loved going to Northwestern. It was an amazing school," she began quietly.

## La Cantante

Alice and I sat on Rosalie's bed and waited for Rose to continue her story.

"I was so proud of myself when I got my acceptance letter. Everything I had worked for in high school had finally paid off. I got into my dream school. I was going to pursue my dream career.

"My parents were not happy that I wanted to go so far away. I pleaded with them to let me go to Chicago. I had also been accepted to here and Cornell. They eventually relented and agreed for me to go to Northwestern. I assured them that I would be safe.

"In September of last year, I moved into the dorms. I lived with a quiet girl. We didn't talk much, but that was okay. I wasn't there to party. I was there to work and get an education. I became friends some other girls on the floor. We became very close, very quickly. They decided to rush a few sororities. I joined them. We eventually got accepted to Delta Zeta sorority. We were paired up with a fraternity, Chi Psi. When we planned events, we worked together with them.

"One of the brothers, Royce King, who was a junior, was very taken with me. I was very taken with him as well. He was devastatingly handsome. He had blonde hair and green eyes. He was tall and lean. He was physically my type. We were paired up to create the theme for the Halloween party. We came up with great ideas and worked well to have the best Halloween party in recent campus history. Royce and I decided to go to the party together. He was a cowboy and I was a saloon girl. At the party, Royce and I hooked up as a couple.

"In the beginning of our relationship, he was the epitome of a perfect boyfriend. He was sweet and attentive. He spoiled me rotten. He took me to the best restaurants in Evanston and Chicago. I spent Thanksgiving with his family because I couldn't afford a plane ticket to get home. His parents, Katherine and Royce, were so pleased with our relationship. I thought he was perfect; that we were perfect."

Rose closed her eyes and several tears fell down her cheeks. I reached across the bed and grasped her hand. She seemed startled by the contact. She looked



## La Cantante

into my eyes and smiled sadly. Rose seemed comforted by the small gesture.

"You don't need to continue, Rosalie, if it's too much for you," I said reassuringly.

"No, Bella. I need to do this," she replied as she pulled her legs into a pretzel. I took her hand into both of mine. Alice did the same. Rosalie needed our support and our strength. We were determined to give it. She tightened her hold on our hands and took a deep breath.

"I came home, back to New York, for Christmas. Royce and I spoke on the phone every night. He sent me my Christmas present and it arrived on Christmas eve. I was expecting something sweet from my sweet boyfriend. What was sent to me was NOT sweet," she sneered.

Alice and I shared a cautious glance.

"What did he send you, Rose?" Alice asked.

"He sent me several pieces of lingerie and sex toys. I was disgusted. Royce knew I was a virgin. Up until that point, he didn't pressure me for sex. Don't get me wrong, he was not unsatisfied. However, I was not ready what I saw in that box. I called him up and screamed at him at his gall at sending me such an appalling gift.

"He was genuinely surprised at my reaction. He thought I would like it. I scoffed at his response. He apologized for his choice. He did feel bad, or so I thought. I threw out his original present and he sent me another Christmas present. This one was the sweet one I had hoped I would have gotten in the first place: a diamond heart pendant. I put the pendant on with pride. I returned back to school with a smile.

"The first time I saw Royce after the break, he seemed indifferent towards me. He wouldn't acknowledge me in anyway. I was so confused. I assumed I upset him when I called him on his Christmas gift, but I thought he was over it. This continued for two weeks before I got fed up with his behavior and I went to

## La Cantante

visit him in his dorm. I asked him what his deal was. He replied that he couldn't be with a 'prude.' He unceremoniously broke up with me. I tore the pendant from neck and threw it at him

"I was broken, hurt, betrayed and embarrassed. I ran back to my dorm and cried for days. I didn't see him until the end of February. We were asked to plan a party for 'March Madness.' I flat out said no. Since our break up, I distanced myself from the sorority and focused my energy to my studies. On the night of the party, Royce showed up to my room. He was so drunk. My roommate had gone home for the weekend, so I was there by myself. He said that he was there to escort me to the party. I slammed the door in his face. He kicked the door open and in his eyes I could see so much rage. He grabbed me by my arm and dragged me out of the dorm. I fought him every step of the way," Rose cried.

"He pulled me into a secluded area between my dorm and the sorority house. I heard several voices, all of them Chi Psi brothers. I began to panic. I clawed and hit at Royce. He slapped me across the face. He called me a 'fucking tease.' I should have 'given it to him long ago.' He ripped my shirt from my body and forcefully pulled my jeans and underwear down. I screamed and pleaded with him to not do this. His eyes were vacant. This was not Royce. He threw me down on the ground and entered me with such force I thought I was going to split in two. He finished and his brothers all took turns with me. After what seemed like forever, they laughed at me and left. I gathered my clothes and crawled back to my dorm.

"I called the police and informed them what happened. I was taken to the hospital and examined. I had a broken jaw, broken cheek, fractured ribs and severe vaginal tearing. They were so brutal, the doctor's are unsure if I can ever have children because of the damage and scarring. Apparently, I wasn't the first girl that Royce did this to. There were several open rape cases with his genetic profile. They arrested him and his fraternity brothers. Royce was arrested for five different rape cases. His brothers were only arrested for mine. They are currently awaiting trial in Chicago. I have to go back at some point to testify against them. It'll probably happen this spring. That's what the state's attorney told me the last time I met with him.

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"I dropped out of school after that incident and came back home. I knew I wanted to go to college and I wasn't going to let those animals prevent me from obtaining my dream. I contacted Emerson University and I transferred. I'm in my second year of school, but I am still classified as a freshman because I didn't finish my freshman year. I'll have to take summer school to graduate on time."

*Holy shit.*

"Rosalie, is there anything that we can do to help you?" I asked gently.

"Don't pity me. Just do what you've been doing," Rosalie reasoned. "The short time with the two of you has really helped. Even more so than the time I've spent with my therapist."

"We'll do whatever you need, Rose," Alice said.

"Thank you, so much," she replied fervently. She wiped her cheeks with her hands and gave us a watery smile. "Okay, enough about my drama. Let's talk more about Bella and her dream boat."

"Oh jeez!"

"Yeah, Bella. Are you going to see my brother again?" Alice said, fluttering her eyes.

"We're meeting today at the music building to discuss some song choices for Breaking Midnight. Edward asked me to make a list of songs that the band can add to their set list. I wonder if they need a keyboard player in addition to a singer?" I wondered.

"You can play the keyboard, Bella?" Alice asked.

"Yeah. I'm not very good but I can play some."

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"Edward has complained that they need a keyboard player. He can play but it's hard to play keyboard AND the guitar at the same time. He'll probably love it if you played," Alice enthused.

"Do you ladies want to help me come up with some songs to bring to my rehearsal?" I asked. I really didn't know where to begin. The girls moved from Rosalie's bed to mine. We huddled around my computer and began listing some songs that could work with Breaking Midnight's sound. By the time we were done, we had about twenty songs.

"Okay, Bella...time to get ready for my brother!"

"Oh, jeez! Alice, I'm not going to 'poof' for a rehearsal. I'm not your own 5'4" Barbie doll."

"Ugh, fine!"

*Meddling pixie.*

**A/N: Okay this chapter was short. It needed to be. It was very tough to write. I tried to pair up the heavy stuff with a bit of fluff.**

**Up next, rehearsal time with Edward in the music building.**

# Buona Notte

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them. I'm also looking for songs that would work for the story. Please leave a review or PM me if you have suggestions.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 10: Buona Notte

### EPOV

I puttered around my dorm room as I waited for the clock to tick to 6. Emmett had set up his Playstation and we played some Call of Duty. My heart really wasn't into it. I gave up after the third time my character died. I shuffled back to my room and began unpacking my clothes and placing them in my closet. Jasper was fiddling around with his guitar. A playful smile was on his face and he had a dreamy look in his eyes.

"I think I'm in love," he said longingly.

My brows shot up to my hairline, "With whom, Jasper?"

"Alice," he sighed.

*Oh jeez! Just what I need, Jasper using my sister as rebound.*

"She's not a rebound, Ed."

*Did I say that out loud? Shit!*

"She's my lobster."

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"Your lobster? What the fuck are you talking about, Jasper?" Emmett said mirthfully.

"Have you guys never seen 'Friends?'" Jasper asked as he quirked an eyebrow.

"The show set in New York? With Jennifer Aniston? Hell yeah! She's hot," Emmett said as he wagged his eyebrows. I nodded in reply.

"Well, in one show, Phoebe said that lobsters mate for life. It was the episode where Ross and Rachel kissed for the first time. She exclaimed that Rachel was Ross's lobster," Jasper explained.

"And you think that my sister is your, um, 'lobster?'" I asked, trying to contain my laughter.

Jasper threw a pillow at me as he replied, "Shut it, you douche! I never felt this way about anyone. I know I met your sister before but I was dating Maria at the time and I didn't give her a second look. She was your SISTER from Christ's sake. Now that I'm single, I am looking at Alice in a different light. She's amazing."

I blew out a breath and looked at my roommate. I eyed him speculatively and gave him the best "big brother stare." Jasper visibly shrank back onto his bed.

"Are you okay with this, Ed?"

I stared at him for a few moments longer.

*Let him sweat it out for a spell.*

"Please? It would mean the world to me if you were okay with me and Alice, um... had your blessing?" Jasper sputtered.

"My blessing? You're not asking to marry her, are you Jas? If so, I'm the wrong person to get the blessing from. That would be Carlisle. However, it's cool if you date my sister. If you hurt her, though, I will not hesitate to kick your ass.

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Clear?"

"Crystal," Jasper replied with a look of relief on his features.

*No time like the present to talk to Emmett about my Bella.*

"Speaking of blessings, Em," I said.

"No. You're not dating Isabelly," he growled.

"Fuck! Why not?" I whined.

"One word...Tanya," Emmett reasoned.

"Okay, one mistake and I'm scorned for life? Seriously, Emmett? I really like her and I'm fairly certain she feels the same way."

Emmett heaved himself up and strode across the room. He grabbed my collar of my hoodie and slammed me against the wall.

*Ow. That hurt!*

"Why do you want to date my sister? You can have any girl in this school and you want MY sister!" he yelled. "Give me one reason not to kick your skinny ass and fuck up your pretty face."

"*È il mio cantante*," I whispered.

"Huh? You know I don't speak German," he grumbled as he released the grip on my shirt.

"It's not German, you moron. It's Italian. It means she's my singer. I told Bella this last night. My mom and I shared the love of music. She taught me how to play the piano and we used to sing together all of the time. We did that until she died when I was nine. She called me her singer. I completed her, she said. She completed me, as well. When she died, a part of me died with her. I had a

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huge hole in my chest and heart. That hole was filled last night when Bella sang with us last night."

Emmett thought about what I said. A scowl was still painted on his face. He wasn't budging. I could see the gears grinding in his head. He needed further explanation.

"Let me rephrase. She's my lobster," I said lamely, trying to make a joke.

His eyes glared into mine, "Let me make this perfectly clear. You hurt her, make her cry, or even remotely unhappy, I will have the football team kick your ass and then take your car and throw it into Lake Erie. You'll wish for death if you hurt her, Cullen."

I gulped as I stared at Emmett's murderous glare. He forcefully pushed me back into the wall before he released me.

"Don't fuck up, Cullen," Emmett sneered. "I'm going to go to the gym. I have to go beat something up."

Emmett gathered his gym bag and grabbed his keys. He bumped into me, causing me to fall on my ass by my bed, as he strode out of the room. Jasper was silently laughing at what happened.

I scrambled off the floor. "You know you got off easy, Whitlock. Quit sniggering. I may not be as big as Emmett, but I can still kick your ass."

xx LC xx

I was surprised at Emmett's reaction. Well, I was more surprised at how quickly he agreed to let me pursue Bella. Perhaps it was my sentimental story about her being my singer. I fervently hoped that I had no intention of hurting Bella.

After the confrontation with Emmett, I gathered my keys and headed to the local Super Target. I needed to pick up some things. I meandered around the



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store for an hour and half, gathering food, school supplies, and other necessities. Before I left, I picked up some freshly baked cookies for Bella and a huge tub of Mac and Cheese with Bacon for Emmett.

I returned to Patterson with my spoils and walked back into my room. Jasper was napping on his bed with his iPod in his ears. Emmett had returned from the gym. He was typing furiously on his computer. His hair was damp, indicating that he had just gotten out of the shower. I stalked over to his desk, with my arms raised in peace.

"I come bearing gifts," I said with a crooked smile. Emmett glowered at me. I reached into the bag and got the tub of Mac and Cheese out for him. He eyed the tub. When he realized what it was, his eyes lit up. He opened up the top drawer of his desk, grabbed a fork and ripped the lid off of the macaroni. He began devouring the pasta.

I chuckled at his reaction and walked to my bed and began to unloading my bags. I was so focused on my task, I didn't hear Emmett come up behind me. His large hand clapped on my shoulder as he spun me around.

"Edward, I'm sorry about reacting that way when you said that you were interested in my sister. I'm very protective of her. I'm thinking something happened to her last year and I don't want her to get hurt. You're a good guy. Tanya was a mistake. I know that and I won't hold it against you. But I do mean it, if you hurt her, you will wish for death. Thanks for the Mac and cheese."

"You're welcome, Em. I promise I won't hurt her. I feel very protective of her as well," I said quietly. My mind raced to what Bella had said last night about Jacob. "I do have a question for you though."

"Shoot."

"Jacob?" I asked warily.

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"Oh boy," he said as he ran a hand through his hair. "Bella will have to tell you that. It's not my place. However, I can tell you that they dated for a year and a half. That's all I really know."

*So, they dated. I'll kill the motherfucker. Asshole!*

"Thanks for the information," I seethed.

"What do you know about Jacob?" Emmett asked with concern.

"Not a lot. Bella asked me not mention it to you. I want to get the story from her."

Emmett roared. I flinched back, afraid that he was going to start letting his fists fly. Jasper jumped out of his bed with a wild look in his eyes.

"Em, please calm down!" I said quietly.

"I knew that kid was bad news!" he growled.

"You don't know what happened. I don't know what happened. The only people who do are Bella and Jacob. Please don't fly off of the handle over a situation you don't know all of the information," I rationalized.

Emmett took a deep breath and nodded. He punched his desk before he sat down and finished eating the rest of his Mac and Cheese. I shared a troubled look with Jasper. Jasper just shrugged. I glanced at the clock and noticed it was a little after 5. I took out my cell phone.

*I miss you. Want to head out early? - E*

*I'm just putting finishing touches on my list of songs. Give me 5 mins? - B*

*That's 5 mins too long :( - E*

## La Cantante

*Patience is a virtue, Edward. Good things come to those who wait. Keep texting me and it'll take longer - B*

*Fine. See you in a little bit \*pouts\* - E*

I gathered my messenger bag and a file with all of the songs that Breaking Midnight has performed in the past. I also grabbed my laptop. I had some pieces saved on Finale that I wanted Bella to look at while we worked. I placed my laptop, music and iPod into my messenger bag and headed downstairs to Bella's room. When I got there, the room was open.

I knocked on the door before walking in. I saw Rosalie on her bed. Her eyes were red and puffy but the worried look that was on her face the two times I met her was gone. She was reading a book and listening to her iPod. Alice was fussing in her closet.

"Dammit! I have NOTHING to wear!" she fumed.

"Alice, you have more clothes than God. You have something to wear," I teased.

She poked her head out of her closet and stuck her tongue out at me. "Okay, Green-Eyed Freak, I have stuff to wear. However, none of it says 'first-day-of-college' chic. You know?"

"Ummmm...No. Alice, I don't know. Not everyone is a clothes-horse like you. Relax."

"Fine...whatever. It's not like I would take fashion advice from you. A hoodie, Edward? Also, haven't you heard of a comb?"

"No matter how many times I try to tame this," I said as I pointed to my disheveled bronze locks, "it doesn't happen. I have tons of cowlicks. I can't help it if I have awesome sex hair."

"Sex hair? That's a description for the ages," Bella laughed from behind me.

## La Cantante

*Shit. She heard me. I'm such a moron.*

"Ummm....you heard that?" I asked.

"Yep," she said as she walked up and ruffled my already messy locks. "And as a matter of importance, I love your...what did you call it? Sex hair. Let's go!"

*Bella Swan is going to be the death of me.*

"You want to walk or drive?" I asked.

"Walk. I need to get the feel for campus," Bella said as she grabbed a small leather messenger bag from her desk. She placed it on her shoulder.

"Alrighty, then. Let's go."

I swung my messenger bag over my head and laced my fingers with hers. The sky was a lovely pink color, as the sun was setting. However, there was a low rumble in the distance. It would probably storm tonight. We walked through the sleepy campus of Emerson University in a comfortable silence.

It took about fifteen minutes to reach the music building, Brandon Hall. The music building was just renovated two years ago. It boasted state of the art facilities. The ensemble rehearsal spaces were sound proof. There was a recording studio in the basement. Each music student was assigned their own rehearsal practice space. It housed music technology lab and one of the most beautiful performance spaces ever created. It was an amazing building. I used my keys to unlock the building. Bella looked at me with a questioning look on her face.

I chuckled, "Each music student is issued keys. There is a ton of expensive equipment and the university doesn't trust the random students to leave the building open. You'll probably get yours when you have your first voice or piano lesson."

She nodded, "How do you have keys already, Edward?"

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"I may not have declared myself as a music minor last year, but I take piano and voice. I need to in order maintain my scholarship. I picked up my keys last week. I was asked to play at the Opening Convocation on Tuesday evening and I needed to practice the pieces that I chose. I could practice at home, but I'd rather do it here. The pianos are in tune and it drives me up the wall when they aren't."

"Like nails on a chalk board. I cringe whenever I hear an out of tune piano. It also sucks that I have perfect pitch..." Bella explained as we walked up the stairs to the practice rooms.

"Wait, you have perfect pitch?" I asked excitedly.

"Erm, yeah. I hate it though."

"Why?"

"You'll see when we sing an accapella piece in University Singers. My brain CANNOT change the keys. We tried to do it for Commencement. We sang Dr. Santiago's 'Set Me As A Seal.' It was written in the key of D minor. There were some high notes that the sopranos had difficulty reaching. My choral director tried to lower it a full step and I couldn't do it. We ended up singing it in the original key. My director had to do some minor rearranging to make it work. It's a curse."

"I never thought of it that way. Interesting..." I mused. "Here's my room."

I unlocked the door to the small rehearsal space. Located inside was a baby grand piano with a small lamp on the corner, a small sound system, and one of my guitars. In the corner of the room was a small leather chair and a tiny table with a lamp. I flipped on the lights and closed my eyes at the harshness of the fluorescent lights. I strode to the table with the lamp and switched it on. I then switched on the lamp on the piano and flicked the overhead lights off.

"Much better," I said. "Not as harsh."

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Bella slowly walked into my practice room. She placed her messenger bag that she brought and dumped it in the corner of the room next to the chair. She ran her hands over the piano. She sat down on the piano bench and lifted the lid. Her hands ghosted over the keys. She closed her eyes and began noodling her fingers over the black and white keys. She started to play a familiar tune. I immediately recognized it as *Clair De Lune*.

"You play?" I whispered.

She nodded as she continued to play. I watched in amazement as her tiny hands played the rich, lush chords by Debussy. She played with such emotion, such passion. I couldn't tear my eyes away from her. With each note, each chord, my feelings grew. The emptiness I felt in my heart after my mother died was being filled with beauty, talent and love that was Bella. I quietly walked to the piano and sat down next to my Bella. She had such a delicate style of playing. I was transfixed by her. I listened in silence until she concluded the beautiful piece, in awe of her beauty and talent.

The final chord resonated through the small practice room. Bella opened her eyes and gazed into mine. I couldn't resist kissing her. One of my hands reached behind her neck and the other snake around her waist. I crashed my lips against hers. Her hands fisted in my hair and gripped my hoodie. I slowly licked her bottom lip, asking for entrance into her mouth. She granted it to me with a soft moan. She pulled my top lip between her lips and began nibbling.

*Damn, this girl can kiss!*

I pulled away from her lips and traced my tongue along her jaw. I kissed and suck gently on the sensitive spot beneath her ear. She whimpered at the contact. She roughly pulled my face back to hers and thrust her tongue into my mouth.

*That's hot. I like aggressive Bella. She can play with me any day!*

We kissed until we needed to break apart from lack of oxygen. I kissed her cheeks, her nose and gave her a chaste kiss on her lips before completely

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pulling away from her. I gently caressed her cheeks and tucked a piece of hair that fallen out from her ponytail behind her ear. Her eyes twinkled behind her glasses. I gave her a crooked smile.

"I could kiss you forever, Isabella," I said as I brushed my lips on forehead.

"Who says you have to stop," she stated simply. She kissed me sweetly.

"You're incredible, Bella."

"No, that would be you, Edward," she said as she ran her hand down my cheek. Her soft hand on my face felt so nice. "You need to shave. Nice scruff, Cullen."

"I'll do it tomorrow," I laughed as I ran my hand across my cheek. I really was scruffy. "Perhaps I'll do it tonight, since we have an early class tomorrow. You still want to walk to theory together?"

"Definitely. Do you have a class after?"

"I have about an hour before my next class after theory. We can get breakfast if you have time," I said with a smile.

"Sounds like a date. So, let's talk music for Breaking Midnight," she transitioned.

"Before we do that, there is something I want to talk to you about," I said with a grimace on my face.

"Uh oh. I don't like that look," she said as she pulled away to look at my face.

"Emmett."

"Shit, Emmett," she responded.

"I kind of told him that I have feelings toward you," I said sheepishly. "It made sense. Jasper just about professed his love for Alice and asked for my blessing.

## La Cantante

Like he was asking for her hand or something. Anyhow, I brought it up with Emmett and was not happy."

"Oh no! What did he do?" She cried.

"Grabbed my hoodie and slammed me into a wall? He also shoved me on my ass."

"Ugh! I'm going to kill him!" Bella screamed as she got up and started pacing around the small practice room.

I hopped up and held my arms out, "Bella, wait. I told him what I told you last night. Not in so much detail, but I think he gets that my feelings I have for you are NOT just a crush."

Bella stopped pacing and turned to face me. Her brow was raised over her glasses. She gestured with her hands for me to continue. I chuckled at her reaction.

"Bella, my feelings for you are much stronger than a crush. I can't describe how I feel. I'm hesitant to say 'love' because I don't want to freak you out, but that's the closest word I can use to have you understand my feelings. Emmett gets that. However he told me that if I hurt you, he'd have the football team kick my ass and dump my car into Lake Erie."

Her eyes softened at my confession. She walked toward me and melted into my arms. I held her tightly and swayed back and forth. She mumbled something into my chest.

"I'm sorry, Bella. I didn't quite get that," I chuckled.

"I'm still going to kill him. I understand his protectiveness for me. However, when I needed it, he was here," she said as she played with the pocket of my hoodie.



## La Cantante

"Whoa, wait a minute, Bella," I said with concern in voice. I used a finger to lift her chin to force her to look me in the eyes. In her brown eyes, I saw sorrow, fear and shame. "Explain that to me. Does this have something to with... Jacob?"

She nodded. She started to open her mouth when her phone shrilled from her bag in the corner of the room. She rummaged in her bag and picked her phone.

"Hello?" she said with a wary glance at my direction.

*This conversation is not over. Why are you so sad? So afraid? So ashamed? Tell me, Bella!*

"Hello, Renee. Yes, I'm excited about starting college tomorrow," she said with an exasperated sigh. She held up one finger and pointed to the hallway. I nodded and I sat down on the chair in the corner. I fiddled with my phone until Bella returned from her phone call. She walked back into the practice room and gracefully slid to the floor facing me.

"Sorry about that. That was my mom. She wanted to chat with me before tomorrow," she explained.

"That's okay. Why wasn't she here yesterday?" I asked.

"My parents are divorced. I lived with my dad since I was a freshman. My mom remarried and he was a minor league baseball player. He got injured recently. Tore his ACL or something and she couldn't come and help me move in. Phil, my step-dad, is too dependent on her right now."

"Gotcha," I said as I slid myself on the floor and grabbed Bella's hands. I brought both of them up to my mouth and kissed her knuckles and flipped them to kiss her palms. "You completely blew me away with your piano skills earlier. I didn't know that you played."

"Just a bit. I know a few songs very well. However, I can't sight-read for shit," she laughed.

## La Cantante

"I can help you with that," I said as I inched myself closer to her. "It's one of my specialties."

I leaned forward and brushed my lips with hers. I then ran my nose down her neck and peppered soft kisses on the soft skin there. Her breath became uneven and I pulled away with a smirk.

"You're a tease, Cullen."

"Me? Never!" I feigned innocence. "Now, back to our earlier conversation..."

"Oh right, that. Crap. I'd hope you had forgotten."

"I didn't, baby. Based on reaction from the Tanya situation last night and the look I saw in your eyes after mentioned about Em's protectiveness, there's something going on. I would like to know. I'll understand if you don't want to tell me now, but I would like to know soon. I want to help you."

"I like that," she muttered.

"Like what?" I asked.

"You called me 'baby,'" she said with a thoughtful smile.

"I'll call you whatever you want, baby. However, I think you're trying to distract me from the question at hand," I chided as I ran my fingers over her soft cheek.

"You're smart. Too smart," she teased. She rolled her eyes and turned away from me.

*What? I want to look at you, beautiful.*

She lightly hit my knees and I unfolded legs. She settled in between them and pulled my arms around her small body. She leaned against me as she laced her fingers with mine. She took a shaky breath before she began speaking. I

## La Cantante

pressed a soft kiss into her hair and tightened my hold on her.

"Jacob was my best friend in Forks. When I visited there as a kid over the summers, my dad would force me to hang out with Emmett. Emmett hung out with these guys from La Push. That's the Quileute reservation near Forks. Jacob hung out with them. As a kid, we were inseparable. Jacob and I were always together. That was one of the things I most looked forward to when I came to visit my dad. Seeing Emmett was a close second. When I moved back to Forks as a freshman, Jacob and I still maintained our friendship. It was strained though. I was in high school and he was still in middle school. Our strained friendship continued until I was a junior.

"Over the summer before my junior year, Jacob came over to my house. I was in the backyard reading a book. He burst into the backyard and he professed that he was in love with me. I was completely floored. I stood up and stared at him. I couldn't believe my best friend would have his feeling for me change so suddenly. He explained that these feelings had been growing since I moved back two years earlier. He then crossed over to me and kissed me. It felt weird. It felt like I was kissing my brother. I had some feelings for Jacob, but not the feelings that he wanted. He asked me if he could be my 'boyfriend.' I figured that I could try. He was a nice looking guy and at the time he was very sweet. I figured that perhaps if I stayed with him, my feelings would change.

"Suffice it to say, they didn't. We were together for over a year. Jacob would constantly say that he loved me and I would never really say anything in return. I would reply 'me, too,' but never say those three words. I could tell that he was getting very frustrated with me. His frustrations began at his trying to control everything that I did. He decided who I could hang out with. He wanted me to quit choir because he didn't want random people 'ogling' his girlfriend. He then started putting me down. He called me stupid and dumb. It escalated from there," Bella took off her glasses and wiped her face.

I could barely contain my rage toward this mongrel. *How could he treat Bella like that!*

## La Cantante

Bella replaced her glasses to her face and took another shaky breath, "By Christmas, I had absolutely no self-esteem. Jacob constantly told me that I was nothing. No one would ever want to be with me. I'm a stupid, mousy, choir nerd. He would be the only one who would love me. On New Year's Eve, I was feeling really depressed. My dad was working on some case. Emmett was at a party and I was home alone.

"Jacob came over. I could smell the beer on his breath. He pulled me onto the couch and starting kissing me. He was pawing my body and trying to unbutton my jeans. I started to panic. I pushed him off of me and said no. He said that I was his and I would give this to him. He reached for me again and I smacked his hands away. I then punched his face. He raised his fist to hit me when my dad came through the door. My dad saw the whole thing happen. He was so livid. I thought he was mad at me.

"He looked at Jacob and he smelled the beer on his breath. He shoved Jacob into a chair and grabbed his old handcuffs. He cuffed Jacob and called the cops. I refused to press charges, but Jacob was arrested for underage drinking and driving under the influence.

"It was safe to say that we were no longer together after that night, in my eyes. Jacob thought otherwise. In his mind, we are still together. He'll randomly show up and start kissing me like we were still dating. The last time that happened was about a week before I came out here. I was washing my car and Jacob showed up. He had a bouquet of flowers and he pulled me into a kiss. I tried to push myself away. He just held me tighter. If it wasn't for a nosy neighbor, I'm not sure what would have happened. Let's just say I'm happy I'm here and not back in Forks."

Bella twisted her body and turned to look at me. I'm certain that I had murderous look in my eyes. She reached up with a soft hand and ran it through my hair. I closed my eyes and leaned into her touch. I took a few cleansing breaths before I opened my eyes to face her again. I softened my expression and brought my hand to her neck and lightly traced circles under her hair.

## La Cantante

"I'll protect you, Bella. I just found you and I don't want to lose you." I took her hand that was on my face and placed it over my heart. "You've made my heart whole again. I couldn't bear to lose you. This is yours."

She took one of my hands and brought it to her heart, "As this is yours, Edward. However, I need you to be patient with me. I'm still healing from the ordeal with Jacob."

I moved my hand to her lips, "I'll wait as long as I need to do. You're it for me."

She blinked and a few tears fell from her eyes. She gave me a watery smile before she threw her arms around my neck. "Thank you, Edward. You are too good to be true."

"I try," I joked. "We better head back to the dorm. It's getting late and we have an early class tomorrow."

She nodded as she moved away from me. Bella started to laugh. I turned to look at her as I was shutting off the lights.

"What are you giggling about, Swan?"

"So much for rehearsing! Sorry about being such a downer with my drama," she said as she exited from the practice room. She took her bag and swung it over her head. I locked it up and took her face in my hands.

"That took a great deal of courage and strength to get out of that situation. I admire you. Thank you for telling me."

"Thank you for being so patient with me."

I reached for her hand and captured it in mine. We exited the music building and headed back to Patterson. As we were walking, the skies opened up and we were caught in a downpour. Bella and I sprinted back to the dorm. As we were turning onto the street where Patterson was located, the skies lit up with a flash

## La Cantante

of lightening. Bella slipped a little bit. I caught her and scooped her up bridal style. I carried her all the way back to Patterson. She pulled her swipe card out of her pocket and opened the door. I continued to carry her to her room. She was giggling and trying to get out of my arms.

"Put me down, I can walk!" she said with a smile on her face.

"I know. I just love holding you. Since I can't keep you overnight, yet, I'm holding on for as long as I can," I said with a seductive tone.

"Holy crow," she whispered. "Seriously, Edward, we're by my door. I need to get out of these wet clothes before I get sick and I really can't see you as my glasses are fogging up..."

"I got it, Bella," I said as I tentatively put her down. "*Dormire bene, il mio bell'angelo. Il mio cantante.*"

"*Lei dorme bene, anche, il mio bel cantante,*" she replied.

I crushed my lips against hers and pulled her into a tight embrace. Our tongues fought for dominance as her hands fisted in my wet hair. My hands slowly moved lower, past her waist to her ass. I'm certain that she could feel my excitement for her. We kissed for several more minutes until my sister opened up the door and cleared her throat.

*Damn pixie.*

"*Buona notte, bello,*" Bella whispered against my lips.

"*Buona notte, il mio cantante,*" I replied as she turned to go into her room. "See you at 7:15 to head to Brandon Hall."

She nodded and gave a small wave before closing the door.

*Bella Swan will definitely be the death of me.*

**Translations:**

*Dormire bene, il mio bell'angelo. Il mio cantante - Sleep well, my beautiful angel. My singer.*

*Lei dorme bene, anche, il mio bel cantante - You too, my handsome singer.*

*Buona notte, bello - Good night handsome*

*Buona notte, il mio cantante - Good night, my singer*

**Thank you for everyone who has read this story so far. Love it? Hate it?  
Have suggestions? Leave a review!**

# First Day of School

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them. I'm also looking for songs that would work for the story. Please leave a review or PM me if you have suggestions.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 11: First Day of School

### BPOV

I cannot believe I had just told Edward about my entire ordeal with Jacob. I also cannot believe that he wanted to be with me! He really was too good to be true. However, after our conversation tonight. I was very confused. Were we a couple? Was this casual? My heart indicated that this was something much more. My brain thought that it was more casual.

*I really want it to be more! Much, much more.*

After Edward had deposited me in front of my door and gave me the most searing kiss I'd had in my young life, I was to wired to sleep. I floated into my dorm room. My roommates gawked at my dreamy expression. I chuckled at their faces.

"What?" I laughed.

"You've got it bad, girl!" Rosalie sniggered.

"Oh yeah," I swooned. "By the way, Alice, what the fuck?"

"I didn't want my brother to start ripping off your clothes in the middle of the hallway. If you had continued, you both would have been naked, sweaty



## La Cantante

messes in a matter of minutes."

"Ummmm, thanks? I think?" I giggled.

"You're welcome. I'm going to head to bed. I have a business class at 8. See you in the morning, girlies," Alice sang as she crawled into her bed.

"I'm going to hop in the shower. I have a 7:30 theory class and I don't want to get up any earlier than necessary. I'll try to be quiet. Good night, Ali. Good night, Rose," I said quietly as I grabbed my toiletries.

I took a quick shower. When I exited the shower, I wanted to check on my eyes. I was hoping that they had recovered enough so I can put my contacts in tomorrow. I looked at them and they were still pretty red. Looks like Edward is going to get his sexy librarian again. I grabbed some mousse and fluffed it in my hair before I went back into the dorm room. I quickly changed into my pajamas and settled into my bed.

As I was nodding off, my cell phone buzzed from my desk. I padded over and grabbed it. I smiled when I saw a new text from Edward.

*Having a hard time falling asleep, baby. Wish you were here with me. - E*

*Me, too, bello - xoxo - B*

*Sleep well, beautiful. I'll see you tomorrow - xoxo - E*

*You too, Edward. Buona notte - B*

I fell asleep with a smile across my face. This was definitely not casual.

xx LC xx

***BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!***

*What the hell is that? Make it stop! Oh, right. It's my alarm.*

## La Cantante

I rolled over and gazed at my clock disdainfully. I really hate waking up to alarm clocks. If I had my way, alarm clocks would be illegal. I'd rather roll out of bed when my body felt rested. Unfortunately, that's not how life works. Alarm clocks are a sad reality.

*Shit.*

I rolled out of bed and put on my glasses. I heard the shower going and knew it was Alice. Rosalie was changing into some workout clothes.

"Mornin', Rose," I grumbled.

"Not a morning person, Bella?" she teased.

"Ummm, no. I need coffee. Where are you off to?"

"I'm heading to the gym before my first class. I'll see you at University Singers later today. Have fun with lover boy," she laughed. "Ciao, Bella!"

I rolled my eyes as I went to my closet. I stood in front of my closet as I waited for Alice to finish up in the bathroom. I really needed to pee and brush my teeth. I pulled out my clothes that I wanted to wear. I had to say I was pretty impressed with choices. I grabbed a pair of dark wash jeans, purple cami and black sweater. I also grabbed my black ballet flats. I was quickly putting on my earrings and a funky necklace that Alice picked out from our shopping spree on the first day on campus when she waltzed into the room.

"Morning, Bella! Did you sleep well?" she asked.

"I had a hard time going to sleep, but once I got to sleep, I slept like the dead. I'm going to go poof."

"Poof?"

"I'll explain when I get out of the bathroom." I walked into the bathroom and took care of business. I brushed my teeth and applied some light make-up

## La Cantante

before I exited the bathroom.

"Okay, explain poof," she pounced as I walked to my bed where I had laid my clothes.

"When I was in show choir in high school, we had professional make artists and hair stylists. We were a big deal. The girls in the group called it 'poofing.' The doubled the size of our hair by poofing it out with teasing and curls and hairspray and shit. Whenever I need to dress up, I consider it to be 'poofing.'"

"Gotcha! That's cute! I'd love to see pictures of you from your show choir days, Bella," Alice said.

"I'll do you one better. You'll see it. I'm a part of Emerson Express. You'll see me 'poof' for those performances," I said with a smirk.

"Oh, Bella. How about this! I'll do your hair and make up for all of those performances! You'll be the best looking female singer in the group! Please?" Alice pleaded.

"Sure, Ali. Whatever makes you happy! I really need to finish getting ready. Edward and I are heading out to Brandon Hall in a little bit," I explained.

She nodded as she went to get ready. I threw on my clothes. I quickly ran my hand through my hair. I grabbed a clip off of my desk and pulled half of it off of my face. I glanced at myself in the full length mirror behind my closet door.

*Damn, Swan. You look hot!*

I went and gathered my school supplies and put them into my messenger bag. I quickly checked my computer to see what the weather was going to be like and I saw that it was a little chilly. I went to grab my fleece from closet. However, I took a quick peek at Edward's jacket sitting on my desk chair. I shrugged and pulled it around my shoulders. I flipped my hair out of the jacket and I heard a soft knock on the door. I checked on Ali to see if she was decent.

## La Cantante

"Go ahead, Bella. It's not like Edward hasn't seen anything before. We have lived together for 8 years," she said from her closet.

"Thanks, Ali," I said sheepishly. I opened the door and saw the most beautiful creature leaning against my door jamb. He was wearing a pair of dark, distressed jeans with black Doc Martens. He had on a dark grey sweater with a white shirt underneath. The planes of his chest were clearly defined through his sweater. He had a fleece hanging over his black messenger bag.

*So handsome. I want to lick those abs. Yummy!*

"I come bearing gifts," his velvety voice proclaimed. He held out a large cup of coffee. "Nice jacket."

"Oh my God, Edward! You read my mind! Thank you so much," I said as I greedily took from the coffee from his hands and took a large sip. He even made it exactly the way I like it! This man is truly perfect.

*Manna from heaven. Coffee is the best thing. Ever!*

"Are you ready, beautiful?" Edward asked with a grin.

"Almost." I handed the coffee back to Edward and dashed back into my room and quickly sprayed myself with some body spray. I grabbed my messenger bag and pulled it over my head. I finally took my coffee back from Edward and took another sip. "Thank you again for the coffee."

"No kiss?" he pouted.

"Oops, sorry," I said as I brushed my lips against his. He quickly deepened the kiss as he pulled my bottom lip in between his teeth and lightly nibbled.

"Definitely want to kiss you forever," he said against my lips. "Best. Lips. Ever."

## La Cantante

"I beg to differ," I said as I traced my tongue over his lips. "Yours are quite delectable."

"You are going to be the death of me, Swan. Let's go get educated or some shit like that," he groaned. He subtly adjusted himself in his jeans as I walked past him.

"I saw that, Cullen," I laughed.

"Damn. You're just too sexy for your own good."

We laced fingers and I sipped my coffee as we walked to Brandon Hall. I was actually very nervous. I had worked very hard to get into Emerson and I really wanted to succeed. I just I could do my parents proud.

We got to Brandon Hall and Edward led me to another entrance. The door we went in yesterday was for the practice rooms and ensemble rehearsal halls. The door we were going in today was for the classrooms. He opened the door for me and I walked through. He followed me through the door. He pointed to a set of stairs and we set off to go up them. We got upstairs and headed into a large classroom. Edward grabbed my hand and headed toward the back of the room. We sat down in the seats and waited for class to begin.

I placed my bag next to me and got out a notebook, some staff paper, folder and a pencil. Edward had done the same. We had about ten minutes before class began. Edward was absentmindedly playing with my hair as we waited for class to start.

"Have I told you today that you're beautiful?" Edward asked quietly.

"You're going to make my head swell, Edward," I griped. "Thank you, though. You look incredibly handsome, too."

"Eh, I'm okay," he said as he waved his hand dismissively. "You're the beauty in this relationship. Also the brains. I'll be the brawn."

"Dork."

"But I'm your dork," he said with a mischievous grin.

"Really?"

"Forever, Isabella," he said as his emerald eyes pierced through mine.

*Gah! Holy Crow!*

Before I could respond to what he said, the professor walked in. After him a younger man with a blonde ponytail entered as well. Edward and I tore our eyes from each other and turned to face the professor. The ponytailed guy started handing out the syllabi as the professor began introducing himself.

"Good morning! My name is Dr. Laurent Meyers. However, we will be seeing each other 7:30 in the morning for the next 18 weeks and that is just far too stuffy for such an early class. All of my students call me Larry. I hope you all do the same. I've been teaching here at Emerson for four years. I teach Music Theory I, Aural Harmony I, Beginning Piano, and Percussion Methods for those of you in the education track. My assistant, James Loften, is passing out the syllabus for this course. If you turn to page 2, you'll see the text book you'll need for this class..."

As Dr. Meyers, erm, Larry continued his introduction, James handed the syllabus to Edward and me. I jotted today's date on the corner. Edward was glaring at James. I lightly elbowed him in the ribs. I questioned him with my eyes. Edward jotted something on the corner of his syllabus.

*I'll tell you at breakfast.*

I nodded as I turned my attention back to Larry. The first class was actually pretty boring. Larry pretty much reviewed the notes of the bass and treble clef. This was stuff that both Edward and I knew. However, we both took diligent notes. Larry explained our homework assignment, which was to read the first two chapters in the textbook we were assigned and to write a simple melody

## La Cantante

using whole notes that was 24 measures long. An hour and ten minutes later, class was dismissed.

I placed my syllabus in my folder and put my notebooks into my bag. I slipped my jacket, or rather Edward's jacket on, and slipped my bag over my head. I looked at Edward and his brows were furrowed.

"What's wrong, Edward?" I asked. As I asked him, my stomach snarled at me. His features smoothed out as he reached for my hand.

"Food. Then I'll explain, baby."

We walked in companionable silence to the on campus grill, The Cage. We got in line and placed an order for our food. We both had an hour before our next classes. I was heading to Introduction to Education. Edward was heading to Biochemistry. I grabbed some water and another cup of coffee as we walked to pay. I reached into my bag to get out my wallet. However, Edward beat me to it and bought breakfast.

"Got to be fast with me," he smirked.

"I'm paying next time," I frowned.

"Only if you can get your money faster than me. I move at inhuman speeds," he teased.

We got our breakfasts, a muffin and some fruit for me, a breakfast sandwich and hash browns for Edward, and sat down in a secluded area of The Cage.

"Why were you glaring at Dr. Meyers' assistant, Edward?" I asked innocently.

"There's something about him. I don't trust him. He kept looking at you like you were something to eat. It was a bit disturbing," Edward replied.

"I'm certain he won't try anything. I've got you to protect me," I said as I fluttered my eyelashes.

## La Cantante

"You bet your ass I'm protecting you. The only person who can look at you like you're something to eat is me. You're mine."

"Possessive much? Edward?" I laughed.

"Sorry, that came out wrong," he said with a contrite look on his face.

"However, there is something that I would like to clarify with you. This may sound juvenile, but I want to be perfectly clear. I just want to be with you and ONLY you. No one else. In my mind and for all intents and purposes, I consider you to be my girlfriend. Is that alright with you?"

"I'm not sure, Edward," I said.

"Wha...What?" he sputtered.

"Gotcha!"

"You tease! So, you're mine? To keep forever?" he asked with a look of joy on his face.

"If you'll have me, Edward," I said softly.

"Definitely, baby." His fingers ghosted up my thigh and he leaned in for a brief kiss. "You're mine. Yay."

"Yep, yours."

"GOD! Get a room!" We both groaned and turned to face Emmett. "You two are making nauseous."

"Hello, brother bear. How was your first class?" I asked sweetly.

"I was having a great day until I saw my baby sister sucking face with CULLEN!"



## La Cantante

"Sorry to ruin your day. Your sister just made mine," Edward said as he stroked my cheek.

*I will never get tired of him touching me.*

"Do I want to know? Am I going to get a cavity from how sweet it is?" Emmett thundered.

"Well, brother bear, Edward and I just decided that we are exclusive?" I squeaked out.

"Try not to sound so enthused there, Bella," Edward admonished. I shot him a look. He smiled sweetly in response before he tucked some hair behind my ear. I leaned lightly into his large hand.

"Oh, gag me, you two!" Emmett said as he pretended to put his finger down his throat.

I rolled my eyes and smacked him upside his head.

"Shit! You really need to stop doing that, Bella," he moaned.

"Stop treating me like I'm twelve and I will." I glanced down at my watch. "I got to go. I have my Introduction Education class and it's about a ten minute walk from here. I'll see you guys, later."

I gave Emmett a parting sneer and gave Edward a quick kiss. "Bye, baby." Edward pouted as I left.

*He really is so pretty and MINE!*

I walked to my next class, Introduction to Education, and took a spot in the back of the room. I sat in my class, took notes and watched the clock. This class seemed to drag. Another hour and ten minutes and we were dismissed. I was a bit concerned for this class. As a requirement, we needed to do ten observation hours in a classroom. I didn't know anyone locally. I wasn't sure

## La Cantante

how I would be able fulfill that requirement. I guess I could ask Alice or Edward. They lived close by. They could probably ask one of their old teachers if I could observe. As I walked to my next class, Psychology 1, I sent off a quick text to Edward.

*My intro to education class was so boring - B*

*Sorry, baby. :( - E*

*I have a favor to ask, if it's not too much - B*

*I'd go to the ends of the earth for you, baby - E*

*It's not that extreme, Edward \*rolls eyes\* - B*

*What do you need? - E*

*I need to do observation hours for my education class. I have no contacts locally. - B*

*Gotcha covered, babe. I'll send an email to my old choir director after University singers - E*

*Thank you! How was bio chem, btw? - B*

*Ugh! Don't get me started! My brain hurts - E*

*Want me to kiss it better? - B*

*Yes, please - E*

*See you later, baby - B*

*\*Sigh\* Fine - E*

## La Cantante

Psychology was as expected. It dragged like my education class. However, Jasper was in the class with me. I was happy to see a familiar face. We were laughing at how silly the professor was. He was the prime example of a geek. He had thick, black glasses. He was balding and he had the worst comb-over. His pants were too short and his shirt was buttoned wrong. To top off the look, he had a pocket protector. I took a picture with my camera and sent it to Alice. I said that he was in desperate need of a makeover.

After psychology, I headed to my Italian class. I saw another familiar face there. Angela, my RA, was in my class with me. We chatted for a bit afterward and decided that we were definitely going to be study partners if we wanted to pass.

My last class for the day was University Singers. I headed back to Brandon Hall and entered through the same doors I came in with Edward for Music Theory. I climbed the stairs to the top floor where the group ensemble rooms were located. As I entered the room, I was blown away at the sheer number of people in there. University Singers was an auditioned group. Only the top 150 students were invited to join. The nice thing was that once you were in, you didn't need to re-audition every year. There was another vocal ensemble that was open to all students, Concert Choir, but they were not as prestigious as the University Singers. .

On the board of the room, there was a diagram. It asked us to sit in groups of four to six. There needed to be at least one of each vocal part represented in each group. I looked up and saw Edward and Jasper sitting together. I walked toward them. As I got closer, Edward's face lit up. He patted the chair to his right and I settled in. I saw Rose come in and waved her over. She sat down in front of me. Jasper was next to her. There was one more spot for Alice. She bounced in right before class was to start and took her spot next to Jasper. We all began talking about our first day and our classes. As we were chatting, Dr. Eleazar Santiago sauntered into the classroom.

He placed his binder on top of the grand piano in the middle of the room. He gave us a gesture and the whole room stood up. He started doing a physical warm up. The room was silent. Dr. Santiago raised his arms above his head.

## La Cantante

We followed suit. Each physical warm up he did, we copied. I was thrown for a loop when Dr. Santiago turned to right and started to moving his fingers around. Edward grabbed my shoulders and turned me to the right. He began massaging my shoulders.

*Now, I get it! Never did this in high school...*

I reached up to girl's shoulder in front of me and did the same to her. Dr. Santiago had us also do karate chops and "noodles" which felt like Edward playing the piano on my shoulders. Dr. Santiago instructed us to switch and we repeated the process facing the other direction. It felt nice to massage Edward's shoulders. They were so strong. I could feel the muscles ripple under my fingers as I worked out the knots that were there. Edward moaned softly. While we were massaging, a dark-haired woman walked in. She had placed herself behind the piano.

Dr. Santiago turned to her and nodded. She played a key. He modeled the warm up he wanted and we followed. The veterans like Jasper and Edward knew what he was doing. Rosalie, Alice and I were learning as we went. Dr. Santiago's vocal warm ups were challenging but fun. After about ten minutes of warm-ups, Dr. Santiago gestured for us to sit. We all remained sitting straight. He chuckled.

"You all are so trained so well!" He laughed. "Relax. I have a few things to announce before we begin our rehearsal today."

We all sat back in our chairs and waited for him to speak.

"For those of you who don't know me, I'm Dr. Eleazar Santiago. This lovely young lady at the piano is my wife, Dr. Carmen Santiago. I'm the department chair of the music department here at Emerson University. In addition to conducting the University Singers, I also teach music history, music literature, and secondary choral methods. I'm very excited about this year.

"Over the summer I was contacted by a close friend of mine in Italy, Professor Caius D'Angelo. He invited our choir to come and perform at several locations

## La Cantante

in Italy, with a culminating performance in the Sistine Chapel of Mozart's *Requiem* with Dr. D'Angelo's choir. We will be going in the beginning of May after the end of the school year. I know that some of you are panicking about the cost. Dr. D'Angelo is a very wealthy man and is paying for most of the trip through private grants and donations. The rest will be covered by the university. I'm telling you all this now as some of you may need to get passports. You must begin the process immediately. If you have any questions about the trip, please don't hesitate to talk to me or Carmen after class or during office hours. As you leave today, please take a syllabus from the piano.

"Now on to rehearsing. I'd figure we should start with something easy. Edward, can you please out this piece for me? Choose someone to help pass it out."

Edward got up and retrieved the music from Dr. Santiago. He nodded to me and handed me half of the music. I looked down at the piece we were singing. I was giddy! We were reading John Rutter's *Magnificat*. Edward and I finished passing out the music and took our seats. Dr. Santiago asked us to turn to the first movement of the piece. We spent the remainder of the rehearsal working on the first movement of Rutter's *Magnificat*. The rehearsal didn't seem like a rehearsal. It felt more like a group voice lesson. I never felt more challenged, musically. I was very much looking forward to this year and the growth that I will receive from being in this group.

"Excellent rehearsal, ladies and gentleman! The blend and balance is very good. I really like having you sit in a mixed formation. Obviously it didn't throw anyone in reading the music. Please sit in the same spots on Wednesday. Have a good day, folks. Mr. Cullen, can I speak with you please before you leave?"

Edward gave me a smile before he went up to talk with Dr. Santiago. I watched him lope over to Dr. Santiago. They both looked at me and Edward gestured for me to join him. I got up and walked to the front with Edward and Dr. Santiago.

"What's up, Edward?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"Good afternoon, Ms. Swan. How was your first rehearsal?" Dr. Santiago asked warmly.

"I loved it, Dr. Santiago! It was amazing," I gushed.

"Please, call me Eleazar. Anyhow, I was talking to Edward, who happens to be one of my section leaders. I am looking for someone to fill in for the soprano section. My soprano section leader graduated last year and the job hasn't been filled, yet. I was wondering if you wanted it. I was quite impressed with your audition and you are quite skilled at the piano."

"I'd love to, Dr. Sant...Eleazar! However, what about the more experienced singers?"

"No one is as strong as you on the piano and as a singer, Ms. Swan. I want you for the job. For the next rehearsal, we are going to sectional pull outs. I'm planning on keeping tenors and sopranos together and basses and altos together since the parts are similar. You and Edward can co-teach during sectionals. Does that work for you?"

"Sounds great! Thank you so much for the opportunity!"

"You should thank Edward. He suggested you for the position."

"I intend to, Eleazar. I won't let either of you down!"

"Good! I'll see you both on Wednesday. Please take a look at the second movement. That's what I plan to do sectionals on. Have a good day!"

*I'm a frickin' section leader as a freshman! Holy crow!*

After Dr. Santiago left the room, I turned and faced Edward. He had a triumphant look on his face. I playfully glared at him.

"What? My girlfriend is the shit!" he laughed.

## La Cantante

"You are a sneak!"

"Am not. He asked for the best and I told him who was the best," he said smugly. "After lunch we can head to my practice room and make a plan of attack for our joint sectional on Wednesday."

"Are we really going to rehearse or just make out?" I teased.

"Ummmm...both?" he said with a playful glint in his eyes.

"Hey, Edward. Bella. What was that all about?" Rosalie asked as she walked up to us. She handed me my coat and bag. Jasper handed Edward his things.

"Bella is the soprano section leader for the University Singers. We're leading rehearsal for sopranos and tenors on Wednesday," Edward gloated. "I'm so proud of you, baby!"

He snaked his arms around my waist and nuzzled my hair. I closed my eyes at the warmth of his gestures. Edward was one of the most affectionate people I had ever met. It felt nice to feel loved and wanted. I leaned into his embrace. I opened my eyes and saw Alice bouncing on her toes and clapping her hands.

"How much coffee did you have, Ali?" I joked.

"Ummmm...two cups. That's all. I'm just so happy for both of you," she squealed as she ran up to us and enveloped us both in a tight hug.

"Alice...can't...breathe..." Edward choked out.

"Breathing's overrated, Edward. Let's get lunch!"

"We'll be out in a bit. We'll meet you at the cafeteria," Edward said quietly.

"Kay!" Alice squeaked as she linked arms with Rosalie and Jasper.

## La Cantante

They left the rehearsal room and it was just Edward and I. He slowly turned me to face him. His eyes were dark with passion. He lowered his head and kissed me. His lips molded against mine. We kissed for an immeasurable amount of time. He pulled away and was breathing heavily. I was certain I was doing the same. I reached up and lightly scratched his scalp with my fingernails. He closed his eyes and hummed lightly. His hand was lightly tracing circles on my lower back, lightly grazing my ass.

"If you keep that up, we'll never make it to lunch," he whispered seductively. He opened his eyes. They were hooded with lust and passion. "So... *kiss...proud... kiss...of... kiss...you... kiss.*"

"Thank you for the vote of confidence, Edward," I whispered against his lips. "However, I have a ton to do. As much as I like kissing your beautiful lips, I need to get lunch. I then need to go to the bookstore and spend insane amounts of money on books. Finally, I need to do homework."

"Why do you have to be the voice of reason, Bella?" he whined. I lightly pinched his side and he snorted.

"Are you ticklish there, Cullen?" I said as I brought my fingers back to his sides.

"No..." he giggled. "Stop it, woman!"

"Heh...good to know for the future," I laughed.

"You are a dangerous, evil creature," he said as he narrowed his eyes. "But you're mine. Come on, I have to do the same things. We can use my car to go to the bookstore and go to a local coffee shop to get some studying done."

"Good idea, Edward. Let's go," I said as I tickled him one last time before I ran out of the rehearsal room, laughing hysterically.

He sprinted after me and caught up with me right outside of the door of the music building and gave me one last searing kiss before he swatted my ass and



## La Cantante

took off back to Patterson.

*Damn him! Him and his dazzling ways...*

**A/N: For those of you who are not familiar with traditional choral singing. There are four main parts: soprano - high women's voices; alto - lower women's voices; tenor - high men's voices; bass - lower men's voices. Alice and Bella are both sopranos, Rose is an alto, Edward is a tenor and Jasper is a bass.**

**For your listening pleasure, I highly recommend listening to both *John Rutter's Magnificat* and *Mozart Requiem* . I sang both of them when I was in college and they are beautiful pieces of music.**

**Reviews make me happy like a vote of confidence from Edward.**

**Thank you for reading so far. I'm hoping you like it!**

# Complications

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them. I'm also looking for songs that would work for the story. Please leave a review or PM me if you have suggestions.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*Also, just to let you know, Emerson University is a made up university in my head. In the craziness that I call my brain, it's located in upstate New York. I apologize if it's a real university. Some of the aspects of Emerson are based on my college experience as are Bella's (at least the musical experiences).*

## Chapter 12: Complications

### EPOV

I jogged from the music building after I swatted Bella on the ass. She had the cutest expression on her face. She looked like an angry kitten.

*So adorable...even when she's pissed.*

I stopped at the corner and waited for her to join me. She was still standing outside of Brandon Hall with her arms folded across her chest. I ambled back to the music building with a contrite look on my face. As I got closer, she huffed and turned the opposite direction. Her shoulders were shaking.

*Shit, did I hurt her? You are suck a fucking idiot, Cullen!*

"Bella? I'm sorry, baby," I said pathetically. "Don't cry."

Bella turned back to face me and she was not crying, not from sadness. She was laughing. She was laughing so hard that she had tears flowing down her

## La Cantante

face. She bent over in a fit of giggles.

"I'm glad I amuse you, Swan," I said dryly.

"Sorry, Edward. I just couldn't resist," she teased. "I guess I missed my calling as an actress."

"Whatever. You're a tease," I grumbled as I looked at her with a raised brow. "Do you want food?"

"Yeah, I'm really sorry, baby," she said. She wrapped her arms around my waist and laid her head on chest. I folded my arms around her and kissed her head. I then shook my head and started walking to the cafeteria. Bella released her arms from my body and grabbed my hand. We walked hand in hand to the cafeteria.

xx LC xx

After lunch, Bella and I grabbed my Volvo and headed to the campus bookstore. We entered the store and went our separate ways. I picked up my necessary books, along with some highlighters, a new hoodie and a travel mug. I got in line behind Bella and laughed at her grumbling.

"This is insane. I'm buying almost all used books and I'm still going to spend over \$500. Absolute rip off," she mused.

"If it makes you feel any better, I'm spending about \$1000 on my books. About half of the them are used," I reasoned. "My bio chem book is a new edition and it's \$200. What really sucks is if I want to sell it back, I'll get like \$25. That's a rip off."

"That sucks, Edward," she said. She walked up to the register and unloaded her books. The cashier rang up her books and gave her total. Bella had a noticeable grimace on her face as she pulled out her check book to pay for her books. She handed the check to the cashier and finalized the sale. She put the books into a bag and turned to me after she completed Bella's sale.

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I walked up and waited for the cashier to total up my books. She smiled sweetly as she said, "\$1,126.57."

I shook my head as I reached for my wallet. I took out my credit card and handed it to her. I noticed Bella was looking at an Emerson hoodie. "Can you also add that sweatshirt, in a small?" I asked with a crooked grin.

"Sure. Your new total is \$1207.68," she confirmed.

"Thanks," I said. I signed the credit slip and gathered my books. I walked up behind Bella and reached up to get the hoodie in the appropriate. I glanced at the cashier and she smiled as she nodded. I pulled it down and folded it. I handed it to Bella. "For you, Ms. Swan."

"Edward, you didn't." she chided.

"I did. You can't go through your first bookstore experience at Emerson without getting some Emerson-wear. Please accept it," I offered with a smile. She ran her hand over the navy material, over the Emerson University logo.

"Thank you very much," she said gently. "Don't make this a regular occurrence, though."

"I intend to spoil you as often as I can, Bella. You deserve the best. Right now it's a navy blue hoodie. Let me spoil you."

"At least let me buy you some coffee when we get to the coffee shop after," she traded.

"Seems fair," I chortled.

"Not really. I'll have to buy you coffee for a year," she said as we left the bookstore.

"Nope, I only want one and that's all I'll accept," I said. I gathered her bag with her books and led her back to my car. I put the bags in the back seat as Bella

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headed to the passenger side. She slid into the car and I got in the driver's seat. I pulled out of the parking lot and drove for fifteen minutes to a small coffee shop where I used to play some acoustic sets of music last year. I parked the car and turned to face my Bella.

"We're here." She gave me a smile and exited the car. I grabbed the bags with the textbooks and carried them into the coffee shop.

"What do you want, Edward?" she asked.

"Oh, um a grande café Americano, please. A water, too," I responded with a crooked smirk.

Bella went to get in line and I carried the books to a small booth in the back of the coffee shop. I placed Bella's bag in the booth and I slid into the opposite side. I took out my laptop and loaded it up while I waited for Bella to return with our drinks. I opened up my email and sent out a quick email to my former choir director.

*To: Garret Sisko*

*From: Edward Cullen*

*Re: Favor*

*Hey Garrett!*

*It's Edward Cullen. I hope things are going well for you this school year. I would assume so, since Alice is no longer in choir. Just kidding!*

*I have a favor to ask of you. My girlfriend is in an Introduction to Education class and needs to do some observation hours. She's not from the area and doesn't know anybody. Can she do her hours with you?*

*Thanks!*

## La Cantante

*Yours in music,*

*Edward*

I had finished my email to director as Bella came to our table with our drinks. She slid into the seat and handed me my coffee.

"What are you doing, handsome?" she asked.

"I just emailed my old choir director to see if you could your observation hours for your education class. I may be local, but my school is still an hour away. Depending on when you go, Alice or I will have to drive you," I explained.

"Being an hour away by car is a hell of a lot closer than three hours away by plane," she giggled.

"True. I guess I could also let you borrow my car," I said as I grabbed her hand across the table.

"You'd let me borrow your car? Really, Soccer Mom?" she teased.

I rolled my eyes, "I'm not a 'soccer mom.' It's a safe car. Come on, I have a ton of reading to do and I'm certain you do too. I'd like to head back to campus in an hour and half so I can get some practice in for the Opening Convocation tomorrow. We also need to work on our lesson for Wednesday in University Singers."

"Yes, sir," she said with a mock salute. She pulled out Psychology book and a highlighter and began reading.

I took out my biochemistry book, my notebook and a pencil and began reading as well. We sat in relative silence as we studied. I was cursing biochemistry. This class was going to kick my ass. About forty-five minutes into our study session, Bella put her psychology text away and took out her Italian textbook and workbook. I looked at her and smiled. She quirked an eyebrow as she took her glasses off and put them on top of her head.

## La Cantante

"What are you grinning at, Edward?"

"You," I stated simply. "I am thinking at how happy I am sitting with you, doing something so mundane as studying."

She shook her head and went back to her Italian homework. Her phone chirped from her bag. She put her pencil down and grabbed it. She flipped her phone open and her face paled visibly.

"Bella? What's wrong?" I asked, concern lacing my tone.

"Jake."

xx LC xx

### **BPOV**

Things were going so well. I couldn't remember ever being this happy. I had truly found my niche in this world. I was working on my homework with Edward in this adorable coffee shop. It was very eclectic. Every wall was a different jewel tone and each table was unique. I had finished my psychology reading and had taken out my Italian homework. I needed to do the first 10 pages in the workbook and read the first chapter in the book.

I had taken off my glasses. I was getting a bit of a headache from reading with them on. I looked up at Edward and he had a thoughtful smile on his face.

"What are you grinning at, Edward?" I asked.

"You. I am thinking at how happy I am sitting with you, doing something so mundane as studying," he said sweetly.

I shook my head and returned back Italian homework. I was about halfway through the workbook pages. I was struggling a challenging conjugation when my phone chirped from my bag. I dug through it and pulled out my cell phone. I had a new text message. I flipped it open. I felt all of my blood drain from my

face.

*This can't be happening. I'm finally happy.*

"Bella? What's wrong?" Edward asked worriedly.

"Jake." I squeaked out.

I read the text message and my stomach rolled.

*I hope you are enjoying college. If you were with me, you would not be there, though. We'd be together. You better be behaving yourself, not acting like slut or anything. Remember, you're mine. You'll be punished if you forget that. Love you - Jake*

I dropped my phone on the table and ran to the bathroom. I wrenched the door open and dropped to my knees and emptied the contents of my stomach into the toilet. I sat back and leaned against the wall. I pulled my knees up to my body and began crying. How can he still have this affect on me and he's across the country?

*Why can't he leave me alone?*

I vaguely heard the pounding on the bathroom door. I scrambled off of the disgusting bathroom floor. I washed my hands and splashed some water on my face. I swished some water in my mouth to get the nasty taste out. I opened the door and found a very worried Edward waiting outside. I took one look at his beautiful face and I broke down crying.

He encircled his arms around me and held me tightly. I gripped my arms around his waist. I clung to him like he was my personal savior. I pulled away, reluctantly and headed back to our booth. Edward followed me. He slid into his seat and grabbed me to sit next to him. He stroked my face until I had calmed down.



## La Cantante

"I read the text, Bella. I'm sorry if I invaded your privacy, but I needed to know what made you so upset. Before we head back to campus, we're getting you a new phone and a new number," he seethed.

"Edward, I can't. I'm still on my father's plan. I can't afford my own cell phone," I whimpered.

"I'll add you to my plan. You're getting a new phone. That's final. That manipulative prick shouldn't have the right to get a hold of you and cause you so much pain. Don't worry about the cost. Let me take care of you, baby."

"Let me just call my dad and let him know what happened. We've been trying to get a restraining order against Jake. Perhaps this will put it over the edge," I murmured.

He nodded as he reached across the table to pick up my phone. I opened it up and found my father's phone number and sent the text to my dad's cell phone. Then I dialed him. The phone rang a few times before he picked up.

"Swan," he said tersely.

"Hi, Dad," I said quietly.

"Bella? Are you okay, baby girl?" Charlie asked gruffly.

"Not really. I got a text from Jake today."

"What did he say?" he barked.

"I sent you the text that he sent me. It should be on your phone," I stated.

"So, that's what that beep was. I'm still getting used to this whole texting thing. I've heard your mother is doing it. I may as well get with the times," Charlie grumbled. "I can't check while I talk to you. What did it say?"

## La Cantante

"He said that he hopes that I'm enjoying college. I wouldn't be here if we were together. We'd be together, whatever that means. He then called me a slut and said that I was his. I would be punished if I forgot that I belonged to him," I said quietly.

Charlie roared on the other end of the line. There was an unending stream of profanities coming from his mouth. I cringed at his reaction. Edward's hold on me tightened as Charlie carried on with his tirade. He gently rubbed my arms and kissed my temple. He whispered that everything will be alright. He would take care of me. Jake couldn't hurt me. I leaned against Edward and relished the fact that he was here with me .

"Sorry, baby girl. I didn't mean to lose my temper. I had to deal with Jake's shit today. He came to the house looking for you. I reminded him that you went away to college and wouldn't be back until around Christmas. He flew off the handle. He ripped the mailbox out of the ground and through it in the middle of the street before he ran off."

"It's okay, Dad. I just don't like it when people yell."

"Are you alone? Are you with your roommates?" Charlie asked.

"No, Dad. I'm with Edward," I responded.

"Who's Edward?" Charlie grumbled.

"Alice's brother. She's the small pixie girl that I live with. Edward and I are in a few classes together and we were studying together," I said.

Edward's brow furrowed. I didn't want to tell my dad that I was in a relationship. Especially now with this situation with Jake. I leaned in and kissed his nose. I mouthed "Later." He nodded in agreement.

"At least you weren't alone," Charlie sighed.

## La Cantante

"Well, Dad. I called you for two reasons. The first reason was to tell you what Jake did. The second reason was to tell you to cancel my cell phone number. I'm getting a local number that's unlisted. I don't want Jake to find me."

"I'll cancel your number, but I'm unsure how you can afford your own phone," Charlie said skeptically.

"Edward said he would add me to his plan. I'd pay him," I explained.

"Hmph," Charlie barked.

"What?" I snipped.

"I understand the need for you to get a different phone, but I don't like the fact that this boy is offering to pay for your cell phone. Why can't you get a disposal phone? It's cheaper."

Edward gestured with his hand that he wanted the phone. My eyes widened and I hesitantly handed him the phone.

"Hello? Mr. Swan? My name is Edward Cullen. I just wanted to let you know that it's not a big deal for me to add Bella to my plan. Actually, it probably will be better. Her name will not be associated with the number. It'll be under my name. This Jacob character has no idea who I am and will not be able to find her new number."

Edward nodded and grabbed my hand. I looked at him expectantly. He brought my hand and kissed each knuckle. He then looked at me seductively and pulled my pinkie finger between his lips and nibbled on it. He then lightly sucked on my pinkie.

*Gah!*

"Great, Mr. Swan. Once we get Bella's new number settled, she'll call you. Here's Bella," he said with a smirk as he handed me back my phone.

"Dad?" I asked.

"Smart boy, Bella. I like him," Charlie said. I could hear his smile over the phone. "Call me with your new number once you get it. I love you, baby girl. I am hoping that this will allow the cops to give you that restraining order. If it happens, I'll send it to you at the campus so you can have a copy. You'll need to inform the campus police when it does happen. I'll talk to you later. Bye, Bells."

"Bye, Dad."

Edward beamed at me as he began to load up his books into his messenger bag. He lightly shoved me to do the same. I was frozen. Did that just really happen?

"In order to get you a phone, we need to leave. I can't go anywhere with you blocking my exit. I could always climb over the tables, but I don't think they would like that too much. Move it, Swan!"

I clambered out of the booth and put my books into my bag. I slipped on my jacket. Edward put a couple of dollars on the table as a tip and grasped my hand.

"I'm thinking that you need an iPhone. I have it and I love it," he said with a wink.

"Edward! No... no way! That's way too much," I sputtered.

"Think of it as a birthday present. Belated if it happened already passed or early if it hasn't happened yet. When is your birthday?" Edward asked with a smirk. He opened the door to the coffee shop and we walked on the sidewalk to his Volvo.

"September 13th," I muttered.

"Bella! That's on Thursday! When were you going to tell me?" Edward admonished.

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"Ummmm, never? I don't like to celebrate my birthday," I said with my eyes cast down.

"I happen to think that the day of your birth is a reason to celebrate," he said as he pulled me in for a kiss. He angled his face to deepen the kiss. His tongue slipped between my lips. His hands gently cupped my face. I slipped my arms around his waist. He pulled away and placed a chaste kiss on my lips, "If you weren't born, I couldn't kiss you. I rather enjoy kissing you, Bella. It's definitely a day to celebrate."

"An iPhone is really too much, Edward. It's unnecessary," I whined.

"It's my birthday present to you. Come on. Remember what I said in the bookstore? I intend to spoil you, give you the best the world has to offer. Originally it was a navy hoodie, now it's an iPhone."

At this point, we arrived at his car. He was reeling at what he was saying. He opened my door and I got in. He slipped into the driver's seat and I turned to him.

"What happens if we break up, Edward?"

"Never gonna happen. You're it for me."

"Be realistic, Edward. I'm only 18, going to be 19 in three days. You could easily get bored with me," I chided.

"Yes, we're young. I just turned 20 in June. I'm not saying that we're getting married tomorrow, Bella. I just have a feeling that I'm done looking for my soul mate. She's you."

"I feel the same way, Edward. I am afraid of the depth of the feelings that I have for you already," I stuttered. "I never felt this away. EVER."

"Me neither. I like the way I feel. Wait, like is the wrong word. I love the way I feel when I'm with you. I never want it to end. Our journey may not be easy,

## La Cantante

but I want to take each step with you," Edward said fervently.

I sat back in my seat and pondered what just happened. Edward started the car and headed to the mall that Alice and I went to on Saturday when I moved in. We pulled into a spot in front of the cell phone store. I shook my head in disbelief. Two hours later, I was now an owner of a 16 Gig iPhone with all of the necessary trimmings.

"Thank you," I said quietly. "You didn't need to do this. I do appreciate it, very much."

"My pleasure, Bella. Let's head back to campus. I have to do some more reading for biochemistry and some research for my anatomy/physiology class. After that, I just want to snuggle with you."

"You are a romantic fool, Edward."

"You love me for it. Admit it," he chuckled.

I rolled my eyes at his teasing. I felt something with Edward that I never felt before. Was it love? I was too afraid to think it. We'd only known each other for two days. I looked at him as he drove back to Emerson University. He was incredibly good looking. He had a long, graceful neck, strong profile, an angular jaw line, that adorable crooked smile, the insanely messy but sexy bronze hair and the most amazing eyes. His mossy green eyes looked deep into my soul. They probed into my heart and gave it love, protection and happiness. I reached up and ran my fingers through his hair. He turned and glanced at me.

"Enjoying the view, Bella?" Edward joked.

"Very much," I sighed. "I just can't believe it."

"Believe what, beautiful?"

"That you're mine," I said as I brushed a wayward hair off his forehead.

## La Cantante

"Yours. Forever," he said thoughtfully.

*Forever. I love you, Edward Cullen.*

# Sectionals

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them. I'm also looking for songs that would work for the story. Please leave a review or PM me if you have suggestions.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 13: Sectionals

### EPOV

We drove back from the mall after the first day of class. Bella puttered with her new phone. I drove us back to Brandon Hall. We needed to work on our plan of attack for the joint sectional on Wednesday. When we walked into the building, Bella excused herself to go to the bathroom. I took the opportunity to text my pixie of a sister.

*Hey pix! Did you know that Thursday is Bella's birthday - E*

*What? No! - A*

*Party? Nothing too big - E*

*Hell yeah, green eyed freak - A*

*Not Thursday, though. We have Emerson Express rehearsal. Lets shoot for Saturday. - E*

*Awesome, Edward. TTYL! - A*

"Who are you texting?" Bella asked.



"My sister," I responded.

"And...?" Bella prompted.

"She says hi," I said giving her a kiss on the cheek. "Half hour to quickly come with a plan of attack, another hour of studying and then I'm cuddling with you, beautiful."

xx LC xx

Tuesday dragged for me. I picked up Bella for Aural Harmony at 7:15. This class was ear training. I relied on Bella's perfect pitch to help me with this class. I can sight read anything for the piano. However, looking at a piece of music and being able to read it with little to no assistance was something I couldn't do as a singer. After Aural Harmony, Bella and I parted ways. I had my biochem lab. I was not looking forward to it. Then again, if it didn't have anything to do with music, I never did. I trudged through the lab with my partner, Eric Yorkie. That kid knew his shit. I would definitely ask him to help me with the biochem stuff. At the end of the lab, I asked if he would be willing to be study partners. He agreed.

*Thank God!*

After my lab, I ran to Brandon to do a quick run-through of my pieces that I was playing for Opening Convocation. I was playing two pieces. I chose *Clair de Lune* and the first movement from Beethoven's *Pathetique Sonata*. They were easy pieces for me and easily recognizable. I was one of several students who were providing "background music." The Opening Convocation was mainly for the freshmen. Bella said that she was going to be there along with her roommates. I practiced for about an hour before I headed to U.S. History.

When I entered the classroom, I was pleasantly surprised. Jasper and Bella were in the class with me. They were chatting quietly in the back of the room. I strode over to them and plopped down in a chair next to Bella.

"Hey, baby," I said.

## La Cantante

"Hi, Edward," she said as she gave me a chaste kiss on my lips. I was not having that. I nibbled on her bottom lip before releasing her.

"Tease," she admonished.

"Hey, Jas. I thought you took this class, already," I asked confusedly.

"I did. I'm the TA. You'll be turning to me for questions, bitches," he said with a rueful smile.

"Oh, jeez! How much do I need to pay you to see the tests beforehand?" I teased.

Bella lightly smacked my arm. "Ignore him."

History was interesting, to say the least. The teacher was very much like Jasper. They had a strange connection to the Civil War. The teacher informed us that we would be focusing our time in class on the Civil War.

*Oh goody. At least my roommate is the TA.*

After our history class, Bella had to head to Brandon Hall to go for her first voice lesson. I wished her luck with a brief kiss. I headed to my final class of the day, Calculus. Tuesdays and Thursdays were going to kick my ass. I was constantly on the go from 7:15 until 3:00. Tuesdays were mildly easier. I was done after Calculus on Tuesdays. On Thursdays, I had time for a brief dinner before heading to Emerson Express rehearsal for two hours. Two hours of singing and dancing.

After Calculus, I went back to my room to shower and change for the Convocation. I pulled my tuxedo from my closet and got dressed. I attempted to tame my hair, failing miserably. I quickly sprayed some cologne on and wondered if Bella, Rosalie and Alice would like to drive with me to the Convocation. I headed down to their floor and lightly rapped on their door.

## La Cantante

Rosalie opened the door. She was wearing a black dress with red heely things. I think they were called stilettos? How the hell would I know. I'm a guy. If it's clean, it's in fashion. Hell, if it didn't smell, it was in fashion.

*Okay, I'm better than that.*

"Hi, Edward. This is an unexpected surprise! You look really nice. Is that a tuxedo?" Rose said.

"Hi, Rose. Thanks for the compliment. Yes, it is a tuxedo. I'm playing for this little shindig. I figured if you ladies needed a ride to the Convocation, I'd offer my services," I said with a crooked grin.

"Sure thing, Edward. Come on in. We're all decent," she said as she opened the door. "Bella is putting finishing touches in the bathroom. How does she put it, Ali?"

"She's 'poofing!'" Ali said from her desk. She was wearing a bright green wrap dress with black Mary Jane shoes. She was putting on a pair of earrings and adjusting her hair.

"'Poofing?'" I asked as I sat down on my sister's bed. "You both look very nice, by the way."

"Getting dressed up and putting make up on. Apparently it was a show choir thing," Alice explained. "Bella, what's poofing, again?"

"It's anytime I have to get dressed up. In my show choir days, the stylists would poof our hair to twice its size with teasing, hot rollers and hairspray. Anytime I have to wear more than jeans, I 'poof,'" she yelled from the bathroom.

Alice shrugged. "So, you're going to drive us, Edward? Thanks. That was unexpected."

"Just trying to be nice. I'm going to the same place as you ladies."

## La Cantante

Bella had exited from the bathroom. She looked absolutely breathtaking. Her mahogany hair was smoothed out with a subtle curl at the ends. She wasn't wearing her glasses like she was earlier in the day. I'm assuming she put in her contacts. She had on a navy blue sleeveless dress that flared out at the hips with black heels. In her ears were a pair of sapphire earrings. Her skin glowed from the inside. She looked radiant.

I got up from my perch on Alice's bed and crossed the room to my Bella. She had yet to acknowledge my presence. "Bella, you look exquisite," I breathed.

"Holy Crap! Edward! You startled me. I didn't you know you were here," she said as she put her hand on her chest.

"Sorry, beautiful," I said as I wrapped my arms around her waist.

"I thought you were playing at the Convocation."

"I am, Bella. I'd figure I'd ask if you would like a ride. So do you?" I asked as I kissed her temple.

"I don't know about you, Bella, but I want to take up lover boy for the ride. There ain't no way that my feet can handle walking up to the Convocation in these," Rose said as she pointed to her shoes. "To answer your question, Edward. I want a ride. I don't know about these two."

"You got it, Rose," I laughed. "Ali? Bella?"

Alice and Bella both nodded their assent. The girls grabbed their keys and jackets. We walked out to my car and scrambled in. Alice and Rose sat in the back seat. Bella sat in the front with me. We drove the short distance to the Convocation. I dropped off the ladies before I got a parking spot. I walked briskly to the Convocation. Bella was waiting for me inside the doors. She was nervously nibbling on her lip.

"Hey beautiful. Why aren't you upstairs with Alice and Rose?" I asked as I linked my hand with hers.

## La Cantante

"I wanted to wait for you. I never got to say that you look insanely hot in your tuxedo. You were too busy scaring the crap out of me," she teased.

"I feel like a penguin," I said as I scrunched my nose.

"A very HOT penguin," she said as she peppered kisses along my jaw line. She then pulled my earlobe between her teeth and nibbled on it. "Bella, stop. You're going to render me incapable of walking if you keep that up."

"Ooops, sorry," she said seductively.

"I'm pretty certain the president of the University would not want one their students pitching a tent as he is performing at the Convocation," I chided.

"There's something about a guy in a tuxedo that turns me on, Edward. I don't mean to make you uncomfortable," she said, gazing up at me through her lashes.

"Well, there's something about an insanely beautiful woman who nibbles my earlobe and is wearing the most amazing shade of blue that turns me on, Bella. However, your discomfort is not as noticeable as mine," I said. I lightly brushed my knuckles across her cheek and pulled her face to mine for a quick kiss. "Come on. I have to play some music and shit. I'm certain you'll like at least one of my pieces I have selected for this evening."

With our hands laced together, we headed up to the reception area. I was scheduled to perform first and then again in an hour and half. When we got up to the reception hall, I gave Bella another chaste kiss and headed to the Steinway piano in the center of the room.

Before I sat down, the president of the University, Dr. Marcus Volturi, waved. I gave him a nod and a smile. I settled myself at the piano and began playing the Beethoven piece first. I closed my eyes and lost myself in the sounds of the piano. About halfway through the piece, I reopened my eyes and noticed that there was a crowd around the beautiful instrument. Bella was a part of the crowd. She was standing in between Alice and Rose. Her eyes were shining. At

## La Cantante

that moment, I had realized that Bella had never heard me play the piano. I poured all of my emotion into the music to make it special for her. I finished the first piece and was applauded. I stood and gave a stiff bow. Before I sat down to play my second piece, Dr. Volturi weaved through the crowd.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please give another round of applause for one of our best and brightest students, Mr. Edward Cullen," he said with a warm smile. "Mr. Cullen is a Pre-Med Major and still has time to partake in other activities here at Emerson. Edward, can you please share your extra-curricular activities with our newest members of the Emerson family?"

"Sure, Dr. Volturi," I said uncertainly. I did not expect to be put on the spot like this. "I'm a section leader in University Singers, a member of Emerson Express, and an officer for the music department. I am also a part of a band with three other Emerson University students, Breaking Midnight where I sing and play guitar."

"Thank you, Mr. Cullen, for sharing that with us. Do you have another piece to share?"

"Yes sir." I turned to the piano and began my second piece. This was strictly for Bella. I began *Clair de Lune* and I brought my eyes to meet hers. Her brows raised at the song and her lips turned up in her own crooked smirk. She raised a perfectly arched brow at me as she licked her lips.

*Tease.*

As I played my second piece, the crowd dispersed, save for Bella, Alice and Rosalie. I finished and the girls gave me another round of applause. I gave my stiff bow for a second time and headed to hang out with them. The next student who was playing took my spot at the piano and began a jazz tune. I slipped my arm around Bella's waist and lightly nuzzled her hair with my nose. Alice was vibrating with excitement and Rosalie had a sentimental look on her face. They both were very happy that Bella and I were together.

As we were talking, Dr. Meyers and his teaching assistant approached us.

## La Cantante

"Fabulous job, Mr. Cullen," Dr. Meyers, Larry, our theory professor said.

"Thank you very much, Dr. Meyers," I replied politely.

"What did I say yesterday morning?" he chided.

"Sorry, Larry," I said. "I'd like to introduce you to my sister Alice, her roommate Rosalie and you know my girlfriend, Bella."

"Nice to meet you ladies," Larry said with a gracious nod. "It's good to see you again, as well, Bella. More awake now than at 7:30."

Bella blushed furiously. "It'll be safe to assume, Dr. Meyers," Larry gave Bella a pointed look. "Larry, that I'll be having my coffee while in your class. I'm definitely not a morning person."

Larry laughed quietly. "Let me introduce my teaching assistant, Mr. James Loften. He's working on his Doctorate in conducting and will be assisting me in all of my classes. He'll also be filling in if I am ever not in class."

James stepped forward and leered at each of the girls, paying close attention to Bella. "It's lovely to meet all of you beautiful ladies," he rasped. Bella inched closer to me as did Rose.

"Well, Edward. We don't want to monopolize your time. Please enjoy the rest of the Convocation, ladies. See you tomorrow bright and early. Bella," Larry said as he shook her hand. He turned to me and shook mine as well. "Edward."

"See you in the morning," James said huskily. Larry and James disappeared into the crowd.

"I don't know about you guys, but that James fella gives me the creeps," Rose said with a shiver. "Sorry, Edward if I got a little too close for comfort. I just needed to move away from the creeper."

## La Cantante

"That's okay, Rose. I agree with you. There's something not right with him," I said.

I glanced at my watch and saw that I had to play another set of music. I nodded to the piano. The girls understood and I snuck away. My second set went very well, earning another round of applause from the crowd.

"Edward, we want to head back to the dorm," Alice said as I strode back the girls. "Are you done?"

"Yep. Let's go," I replied as I grabbed Bella's hand. She turned to me with a radiant grin on her face.

"I'm so proud of you, Edward. You are quite honestly one of the best pianists I've ever heard," she said honestly.

Now, it was my turn to blush. I felt the heat in my cheeks and in rushing in my ears. I gave her a timid smile before I kissed her on nose. I gently pulled on her hand and led her back to my car.

We headed back Patterson in silence. I parked the car in the lot and we walked up to our rooms. I escorted the girls to their room. I gave a pointed look to my sister before they went in. Alice understood and pulled Rosalie into the dorm room so I could give Bella a proper goodbye.

As soon as the door clicked, I crashed my lips to hers. I weaved my fingers through her soft hair and pulled her body flush with mine. I licked and nipped at her lips. Bella whimpered as she opened her mouth and granted my tongue entrance. They moved languidly with each other as the kiss quickly began to heat up. I could feel my arousal press against the zipper of my dress pants. I was certain Bella felt it, too. She actually grinded her hips against my erection. She slipped her arms underneath my tuxedo jacket and lightly scratched up and down my back. On her final pass of her hands, they slipped lower and rested on my ass. I pulled away and nibbled lightly down the column of her neck and inhaling her luscious scent. I lowered my hand from her hair and grazed her ribcage, almost touching her breast. At that point, I groaned and began



## La Cantante

distancing myself from her. I pressed a kiss on her neck, her earlobe, her temple and a final kiss on her lips.

"You are too sexy for your own good, Bella," I said huskily.

"I could say the same for you, Edward," she said with a smirk. "Sorry about your, um, little problem."

She glanced down at the bulge in my pants and giggled. "There ain't nothing little about it, Bella. I'll survive."

"I just wish I could do something about it," she said with a seductive look in her eyes. My brows shot up to my hairline.

*Bella Swan is a vixen. Damn!*

"I may take you up on that. However, not now, in the middle of a hallway," I said reasonably. " *Buona notte, il mio cantante.*"

" *Buona notte, bello.*"

I gave her a quick, searing kiss before I headed up to my room. I hopped in the shower and took care of my problem before I went to sleep.

*Bella Swan is definitely going to be the death of me. But what a way to go.*

xx LC xx

Wednesday was very similar to Monday. I met Bella with a cup of coffee at her dorm room at 7:15. We sat through another riveting lecture about the basics of music theory. Bella and I sat in the back of the room. Every so often, I would catch James almost drooling as he was staring at Bella.

*She's mine, you perv.*

## La Cantante

I kept giving him the stink eye but he wouldn't catch the hint. I eventually scooted closer to my Bella and put my arm around her shoulders and kissed her temple. James' eyes widened. I shot him an evil sneer and his eyes narrowed in understanding.

*Thought so, fucker.*

After theory, Bella and I went for breakfast at The Cage. Emmett was already there, scarfing down a huge plate of pancakes. Bella and I ate with him. Emmett was still apprehensive about my dating his sister. However, he began to realize that I was as protective of her as he was. Emmett mentioned the opening home football game for the next weekend. He asked if we were going. Bella and I said that we would. However, I knew that Eleazar was going to ask the section leaders of the group to sing the *Star Spangled Banner* for all of the home games for the football team.

Bella left to head to her Introduction to Education class and I headed to biochemistry. I sat and took diligent notes during the class. It made a bit more sense after going to the lab yesterday and with Eric's assistance. We stayed back after class and discussed meeting up after the lab on Thursday to compare notes.

I had a break in between biochemistry and University Singers. I had set up my schedule like this so I would be busy on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I wanted my Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays to be easier. I decided to head to Brandon and begin picking pieces for my recital that I was putting on in December before we left for Christmas break. I had my piano lesson after University Singers on Wednesday. I didn't want to be unprepared for my lesson. The hour went by quickly and pretty soon I was heading to the large ensemble room for choral rehearsal.

When I walked in, Bella was already there. She was sitting in the same seat she was in from the first rehearsal. She was skimming her psychology textbook as she waiting for the class to begin. I strolled up to her and plopped down in the chair.

## La Cantante

"What are you doing, beautiful?" I asked as I put my head on her shoulder.

"Reading, handsome," she replied with a twist of my nose. "I don't want to get too far behind in my reading. I have my piano lesson today and I'm not going to have very much free time."

"Who's your piano instructor?" I asked.

"Ummm, I think his name is Benjamin," she said. She rooted around in her bag and pulled out a planner a flipped a few pages. "Benjamin Cairo."

I snorted.

"What's so funny, Cullen?" she asked as she arched her brows.

"Benjamin is my instructor as well. When's your lesson?"

"1:30 - 2:00. When is yours?"

"12:30 - 1:30. We won't be able to go to lunch together, but I'll get to see you after my lesson. Perhaps we can go back to the coffee shop after your lesson?" I suggested.

"I promised the girls that I was going to go to the mall with them. Rosalie needs a new coat and when Alice and I went there on Saturday, we saw a big sale. I've been kind of ignoring them. A certain bronze-haired hottie has been monopolizing my time," she teased.

"Who's that? I'll kick his ass," I retorted.

"Dork," she said as she rolled her eyes.

"But I'm your dork," I said with a kiss.

"You're not mad, are you, Edward?" she asked skeptically.

## La Cantante

I furrowed my brows. "Why would I be mad at you, Bella?"

"It's nothing. Never mind," she said quickly, dropping her eyes back to her textbook.

"It's obviously not 'nothing,'" I pressed.

She took a deep breath and closed her text book. She fumbled with the corner of her book and kept her eyes downcast. "Jacob would get very upset if I ever wanted to go out with my friends. Very rarely would I get to spend time with my friends without Jacob. I usually just hung out with him and his friends," she said softly.

"Bella," I said as I cupped her face, forcing her to look at me, "Every moment I spend with you is a gift. I am grateful that you want share your time with me. Have fun with Alice and Rosalie."

Bella eyed me doubtfully. It was almost like she was waiting for the other shoe to drop. "Are you sure that you're okay with this?"

"Of course, beautiful. Are you ready for our tag-team sectional?"

"I'm actually pretty nervous. I was a section leader in high school. However, it pretty much meant that we were the 'go-to' people to get stuff done. We had no real musical responsibilities. I'm afraid I'm going to screw up and the older members of the section will not respect me."

"Bella, from what I'd heard from the party on Saturday, your mad piano skills on Sunday and your sight-reading skills during rehearsal on Monday, you have absolutely nothing to worry about. The good thing is that we are working together. We can bounce ideas off of each other. You'll do wonderfully. I'll be there if something doesn't go smoothly."

"How do you do that?" she asked with a watery smile.

"Do what?"

## La Cantante

"Know exactly what to say."

"It's a gift, Bella."

Rehearsal had begun. Eleazar wanted us to warm up as a group and to explain the expectations for student-led sectionals. Before he set us off to work in a smaller space, he asked all of the section leaders to meet in his office to debrief at the end of rehearsal and to discuss something.

Our sectional went exceptionally well. The fears that Bella had in our conversation were non-existent. She was confident, well-spoken and demonstrated very well. When she worked with the group, I was at the piano, playing the accompaniment. She gave a very clear conducting pattern and was efficient in her instructions to me. When I worked with the group, she took my spot at the piano and played parts. She didn't feel comfortable enough to play the accompaniment. Honestly, I felt more comfortable with Bella leading the sectional and me being her accompaniment. About halfway through the sectional, I pulled aside and expressed that to her. Her eyes widened in shock and I gave her subtle nudge to the podium and I settled myself behind the piano. We completed the sectional that way. We had learned all of the second movement of the piece of music and even fine-tuned some parts in the first movement that were brought up during rehearsal.

At the end of the rehearsal, the section leaders met in Eleazar's office for a quick run-down of what happened during their respective sectionals. Tyler Crowley, the bass section leader spoke first. The basses and altos worked together for their sectional, like the sopranos and tenors did.

"We did alright. We struggled with some rhythm things but we got those sorted out. I'm happy with the outcome," he said smugly.

"I'm glad. We'll see how things sound on Friday when we put the parts together," Eleazar said. He didn't sound very convinced. Tyler was not the best section leader. However, he had a good voice. "Edward and Bella how did your sectional go?"

## La Cantante

Bella and I shared a look, "It went very well. Edward and I worked really well together. We plunked out notes and fixed some rhythm issues. They were probably the same ones that basses and altos had. We had some time to add dynamics and articulations. At the end, it sounded very smooth. We had some time to also address some things that were troublesome in the first movement. We performed both of the movements before we left rehearsal."

"Excellent. Edward, what was your assessment of the sectional?" Eleazar asked.

"I concur with Bella. I also would like to add that Bella is an amazing section leader. She's skilled at the piano, has a clear conducting pattern and is very comfortable in front of the group. She actually led the rehearsal. I was merely the accompanist," I said with a proud smile.

"I'm glad. We'll see how things mesh together on Friday. Before I dismiss you all, I need to inform you that as section leaders, you represent Emerson University and in turn the University Singers. The Athletic Department has asked for students to sing the National Anthem at all of the home games for the football, basketball, and baseball seasons. Before you leave, I'd like you all to run through this arrangement of the *Star Spangled Banner*," Eleazar explained as he handed out a copy of our National Anthem. He went to go to the piano to give us our starting pitches.

"Eleazar, that won't be necessary. I can give the tonic note for the piece," Bella said confidently. She sang the tonic note and we all found our notes in the chord. She then gave us a cue to enter.

We sight read the *Star Spangled Banner* very well. Bella led us in cut offs and entrances. When we reached the climax of the piece, I could feel the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end. We finished our run through and looked at Eleazar. He had a proud smile on his face.

"You all are truly the best of the best. I'm honored to work with such fine musicians! Bella, can I speak with you before you leave?" Eleazar said.

## La Cantante

"Of course," she said with a timid smile.

Tyler, Tia, the alto sectional leader, and myself, we gathered our things and headed out of Eleazar's office. He closed the door and I was anxious to know what was going on behind that door. I was torn from my reverie by some bickering from Tyler and Tia.

"Can you believe her? She's just a freshman. She has no right being a section leader," Tia complained.

"She may be a freshman, Tia. But she's good. I mean really good," Tyler said. "Not even Zafrina could conduct us like that and she was a senior CONDUCTING major."

"Jesus, Tia. Can you be any more jealous?" I snapped. "She's an amazing musician. Probably has more talent in her pinkie finger than you do in your whole body. Christ!"

"Just because you're fucking her, Cullen, doesn't make you an expert in her 'musical talents.' I'm certain your dick is feeling very happy right now," she sneered.

I saw red. "Don't talk about her like that. Yes, we're dating. We're not fucking. Even if we were, you'd be the last to know," I growled.

"Tia, don't be such a bitch. Just because you're friends with Senna, doesn't mean that you have to be awful to Bella," Tyler reasoned.

"Senna was supposed to be section leader until your bitch waltzed in and stole her thunder," Tia snapped.

"Eleazar wanted the best for the job. Apparently, based off her audition, he determined that Bella was the best for the job. I happen to agree. I worked with her during our sectional. She has the potential to be better than any of this. Don't let your pettiness get in her way, Tia. We're not in middle school. Stop acting like it," I barked.

## La Cantante

Bella walked out of Eleazar's office with a joyful smile on her face. He gave her a fatherly hug and beamed proudly. Tia turned on her heel and stomped away. I couldn't believe that she had said those things about Bella. I scowled at the direction that Tia had left. I shook my head in disbelief and turned to face Bella. She was talking to Tyler who was undoubtedly telling her that she did well. I stalked over to her and wrapped my arms around her waist. The tingle that I had come to feel whenever I had touched Bella calmed my frayed nerves. She idly traced circles on my hands as she spoke with Tyler. I couldn't even tell you what they were talking about. They could have been discussing the national debt, but I was so upset that I didn't really care.

"Don't you have a piano lesson, bello?" Bella's voice rasped.

"Uh, yeah. In ten minutes. Come with me to my practice room, beautiful. I want to talk to you. We'll see you on Friday, Tyler."

"Let me grab my stuff. I'll be right back," she said as she scampered to get her bag and jacket.

"Edward, don't let what Tia said get you or Bella down. Tia has had a pole up her ass since she was a freshman. She sees any new musician as a threat. Bella is a threat in her eyes. She'll back down, eventually."

"Thanks, man. However, what she insinuated was wrong."

"Definitely not tactful. I'll talk to her. Take care of your girl," Tyler said as he gave me a fist bump.

I smiled weakly and waited for Bella to come back with her stuff. She bounced back. Her eyes were twinkling. Apparently Eleazar was pleased with her performance.

I intertwined my fingers with hers and led her to my practice room. I unlocked it and held the door open for her. She walked in and placed her stuff on the chair in the corner. As she passed, I caught a whiff of her enticing scent. She smelled like strawberries, freesias and fresh air. I traced my fingers down her



## La Cantante

arm and I pulled her to my body. I pressed her back to wall of the small practice room. I grazed my nose along her jaw and down her beautiful neck. I lightly licked along her collarbones. I kissed along her soft skin and nibbled up her neck before sucking on her earlobe. She moaned and fisted my hair in her small hands. She roughly pulled my face to hers and kissed me. Her mouth was warm and needy. She bit my lower lip, causing me to groan. She forcefully plunged her tongue into my mouth. Our tongues fought for dominance. I rubbed my hands up and down her torso. I could feel the muscles of her abdomen contract as my fingers made contact. My hands ended up on her hips and I pulled them to mine. She jerked her hips in the most erotic way as I sucked behind her ear.

"Edward," she whispered.

"Oh, God, Bella. You are so incredibly beautiful," I cried. "It was like you were made for me."

"Oh...Edward," she whimpered. I kissed her swollen lips and pulled away from her. Her eyes were filled with lust and passion. Her cheeks were flushed. Her breathing was labored as was mine.

"So beautiful. Exquisite," I sighed as I kissed her deeply. Her lips felt like silk against mine. I weaved my fingers through her soft, thick hair. Her hands traveled down my torso and pulled my hips to hers. I reached down with one hand and lifted one of her legs and hitched it over my hip. I could feel her heat between her legs. I knew in my mind that we needed to stop. Unfortunately, I let my mind win out.

"Bella, baby, we need to stop. I want you so badly. However, I don't want you in my practice room," I said huskily. I unhitched her leg and pulled away. I felt like my heart was being ripped from my body as I distanced myself from Bella. I sat down on the piano bench and ran my hands through my hair.

"Now it really looks like sex hair," she giggled.

## La Cantante

"Don't tempt me, baby. I'm holding on by the smallest thread of control," I said as I pulled her next to me. I grabbed her hand and placed it on my chest. "Do you feel that?"

My heart hammered in my chest. It was beating so fast. Bella nodded. "You do that to me. Only you."

She took my hand and brought it to her chest, right above her left breast. Her heart was stammering as much as mine was. "So do you. I hope it never stops."

"Me, too beautiful. So, what did Eleazar say to you in his office?" I asked. I tried to get my body under control. I needed to slow down my heart and calm down the situation I had going on in my pants.

"Edward, I am so happy! Eleazar says that I am one of the best musicians that he has worked with. I have a natural talent for all things musical. He also said that the pair of us makes a fantastic team. He told me that if he is ever unavailable for a rehearsal, we're to run it. He'll email us the rehearsal plan if and when that happens," Bella gushed. She was bouncing in a fashion similar to Alice at this point.

"I'm so proud of you. You truly are my singer."

"I hope that never changes, either," she said quietly. Her eyes shone with unshed tears.

"It won't. Ever. Unfortunately, I do have a lesson I need to get to," I grumbled. "Text me later."

"Don't forget, my lesson is immediately following yours."

"That's right. So I'll see you after my lesson and if you get back at a decent time tonight, we can hang out."

"Or make out in the practice room," she teased.

## La Cantante

"Don't tempt me, Swan."

She snuggled up to my chest and wrapped her arms around my waist. She sighed deeply. "I really wished that I didn't live in a triple, right now."

"Me too," I said sadly.

"Perhaps I can convince my roommates to let me have the room for my birthday. Not the day of since we have rehearsal, but Friday," Bella said quietly.

My mind reeled at the possibilities.

*Bella in her room without interruptions...alone. Gah!*

"Don't think you're getting any sex, Cullen," she said flatly.

"Wha...What? Why would you think that?" I asked

"Because you're a guy. You tend to think with your little head and not your big head when it comes to physical stuff."

"As I said before, there ain't nothing little about it. Bella, I don't expect anything from you. We'll take this relationship as fast or as slow as you want to. I just want to have time where I can be with you, touch you, and kiss you and be alone while doing it. Not in a hallway, or a car, or a practice room. Just you and me. That's it."

"Oh."

"Piano lesson," I said.

"Right, piano lesson. Have fun. I'll see you later and talk to you tonight."

"You have fun with Alice and Rosalie," I said with a crooked grin. I pulled her heart-shaped face to mine and gave her three kisses before getting up to get my

## La Cantante

things and head to my piano lesson. I adjusted my still deflating boner. Bella laughed at me.

"You did this, you know! You're too damn sexy."

"Ditto, baby."

*I can't wait until Friday. Please let Alice and Rosalie give Bella the room.  
Please! Please! Please!*

# Emerson Express

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 14: Emerson Express

### BPOV

Edward headed to his piano lesson. There was something bothering him, though he didn't mention it. Perhaps I'll bring it up if I see him tonight. I went to The Cage and got a light lunch. I pulled out my laptop and sent my mom a quick email. I also told her my new phone number. I had forgotten to do so when I had gotten my new phone. I also began my educational philosophy paper for my Introduction to Education class. I had a pretty good beginning when I had to head back to Brandon Hall.

I headed up to Benjamin Cairo's studio. I heard Edward play a very lush piece of music. There was a bit of a fumble and I heard Edward curse. He seemed exasperated. I chuckled at his frustration. He was so much like me, it was quite humorous. Edward seemed like the type of person to run a portion of music a hundred times until it was perfect. I did the same thing. I was such a perfectionist.

Edward played a small portion of the piece, very slowly and deliberately, as to correct the mistake that he had made. I heard a clap and then the door opened up.

"Excellent work today, Edward. You really worked hard this summer and it shows," Benjamin said with a satisfied smile.

"Thanks, Benjamin. I appreciate it very much," Edward replied as he shook his

## La Cantante

hand. "I see your next lesson is here. Benjamin, this is my girlfriend, Bella Swan."

"Ah, Ms. Swan. Your reputation precedes you. You are the talk of the music department. I'm looking forward to working with you."

I felt the heat creep up my cheeks.

*Stupid blush. Why can't I take a compliment without turning into a tomato?*

"Thank you, Professor Cairo," I replied softly.

"Please, call me Benjamin. I'm too young to be a professor," he laughed. I looked at Benjamin and he was pretty young. He was about thirty years old. His red hair was short and very curly. He had ice blue eyes that twinkled. I did feel a little weird calling him "Professor." He looked like the character 'Howdy Doody.'

I nodded my assent. I looked at Edward, "You sounded wonderful. What piece were you working on?"

"Something I wrote," Edward said shyly. "It came to me last night and I wanted Benjamin's opinion."

"It sounded lovely, Edward."

"Thank you, Bella. That means a lot coming from you."

"Well, Bella. Are you ready for your lesson?" Benjamin asked.

"Not really, but let's do it," I said with a grin. "I'll see you later, baby."

"I hope so, beautiful," he replied with a sweet kiss to my temple.

*Those lips should be illegal. So yummy.*

## La Cantante

*Focus, Swan. Play the piano. Stop obsessing about Edward's delicious lips.*

My piano lesson went smoothly. Benjamin was a very patient instructor. He seemed to understand my stubborn streak. I assume that he had to with Edward. We reviewed some scales and then we chose a piece that I would prepare for my piano jury. Piano juries and vocal juries were the final exams for private piano and vocal lessons. We would perform in front a panel of instructors and they would critique and comment on your technique. We would also spend our lessons on sight reading techniques and part reading for choirs. After our lesson, I headed back to Patterson Hall.

When I got back to my room, Rosalie and Alice were working on homework. Rose was typing on her laptop while listening to her iPod. Alice was reading a business textbook. I strode into the room and plopped down on my bed. Alice looked up from her reading and gave me an impish grin.

*She's up to something. I have a feeling.*

"Are you ready to head to the mall?" I asked.

"Yep. Let me finish this page and we'll go. Is that okay with you, Rosalie?" Alice said.

Rose pulled out an ear bud and nodded. "I'm almost done with this write up for business law. Where are we going?"

"There are some really cute stores in the mall that have some nice jackets. I also want to get a new jacket as well. My jacket is so last season," Alice complained.

"Alice, you should join a twelve step program. Is there such a thing as 'shopalics anonymous?'" I asked sarcastically.

"There is never such a thing as too much shopping," Alice admonished.

## La Cantante

"Yes, there is, Ali. You are the poster child. I'm surprised that your parents are not broke with everything you buy," Rose teased.

"Meh," Alice responded with a dismissive wave of the hand.

We piled into Alice's car, a small yellow Audi. Rose sat in the front seat and I squeezed in the back. Alice sped to the mall like it was the last mall on earth and it was closing.

"Christ, Alice! Slow down. The mall will still be there," Rose admonished.

"Does Edward drive like this?"

"He has a bit of a lead foot, but nothing like Alice. I fear for my life with Alice. Edward, not so much," I teased.

"You both just suck. If I was in my right mind, I'd just leave you both at the mall and never come back," Alice said dryly.

"I could just call my boyfriend. He'd rescue us, Rose," I retorted.

"Good to know. At least one Cullen is admirable," Rosalie said with a sardonic grin.

"Are you both finished? I didn't know that it was 'National Tease Mary Alice Day,'" she grumbled.

Rose and I shared a look, " *Mary Alice*?" we said together.

"Uh, yeah. I hate the name Mary. So, when I moved in with the Cullen's and was adopted by them, I started using Alice as my first name," Alice explained.

Alice pulled into a parking spot and we headed into the mall. We stopped at every single store in that mall. Alice had a shopping addiction and Rosalie, despite her griping in the car, enabled that addiction. They both ended up with cute jackets. I also buckled and got a leather jacket, similar to the jacket that Edward lent to me. It was still hanging in my closet. I didn't want to relinquish



## La Cantante

that coat. It smelled like him. When I wore it, I could almost feel his strong arms encapsulating me in a cocoon of safety.

After the great jacket search of 2010, we headed to a burger joint in the mall called Rob's Garage. We were ushered to a table in the center of the dining room. We quickly placed our orders and began talking about the first week of school.

"So, Rose, how do you like Emerson?" Alice asked.

"I like it. I like it a lot! Much better than Northwestern. It also helps that I have two awesome roommates," she said with a wide grin. "My classes are a challenge, but I expected that. How about you guys?"

"So far, so good," Alice said as she sipped her Diet Coke.

"I'm really enjoying it," I replied. "I finally feel like I fit in somewhere."

"So, Alice mentioned your sectional during University Singers today. How did you think it went?" Rose asked.

"I felt surprisingly comfortable up there leading rehearsal. Not so much when I was behind the piano," I said with a cringe.

"Bella, I was amazed. You definitely were more than just comfortable up there. You and Edward make an excellent team. I got chills from the rehearsal," Alice said. "I was very impressed."

"Thanks. Eleazar was impressed as well. I had a chat with him after rehearsal and he said that I was one of the best young musicians he worked with, if not the best. I was floored."

"You should be very proud. However, there were some of the other sopranos that were bitching about you being the section leader and not some other girl named Senna. They felt that Senna got robbed from being section leader, after it was guaranteed to her," Alice explained. "I don't believe them. They seem

like petty, spiteful bitches."

"I was afraid of that. I think Edward heard something about that after our debrief with Eleazar. He got very ruffled before his piano lesson and wouldn't really talk about it. Speaking of Edward, I was hoping...never mind."

"What, Bella?" Rose asked with a knowing smile.

"Aw, crap! Well, my birthday is tomorrow. I can't do much tomorrow because I have rehearsal. Anyhow, Edward and I are planning on going out for my birthday on Friday evening. Would it be too much of an imposition to have the room for a few hours Friday night? As a birthday present?" I asked.

Alice and Rose shared a look. "More than happy to do so, Miss Bella!" Alice exclaimed. "Jasper is actually taking me out on a date Friday evening and we won't be back until late."

"Me too, Bella. I'm actually heading back to my parents for the weekend to pick up some things that I forgot," Rose said with a smile.

"Really? Thank you so much, guys! I really didn't want to come off as being a room-hog or anything. Edward and I haven't really had any alone time since we began dating. The only times we've had to ourselves have been in a hallway or a practice room....shit!"

"Practice room? What the hell, Bella?" Alice screamed.

"Uhhh....," I said quickly.

"Didn't quite get that, Bella," Rose admonished.

"Shit! After rehearsal today, Edward and I got pretty hot and heavy. It was intense," I said. I felt my cheeks heat up.

"Damn! Who knew my brother would be an exhibitionist?" Alice wondered.

## La Cantante

"Well, I'm proud of you, Bella. If I was dating Edward, I'd try to get that as often as possible. He is delicious. Not my type at all, but still attractive in a music geek with sex hair kind of way," Rose said.

"What type of guy do you like, Rose?" I asked.

"Honestly, I've been kind of crushing on your brother, Bella. Emmett is one fine specimen of man," she said with stars in her eyes. "He seems really sweet and not to mention good looking."

I scrunched up my nose. "Emmett. My brother, Emmett. The big oafish brute that has bad gas and has the mentality of a two year old. That Emmett? Ewwwww! I think I just threw up in my mouth," I groaned.

"He can't be that bad. He's probably just horrible to you because you're his sister," Rose reasoned. "Anyhow, it's probably just a crush. I'm very hesitant to get into another relationship after Royce. I don't want to get hurt again."

"Well, Emmett may be gross, but he would never do what Royce did. He has a protective brother bear vibe going on. He'd probably kill Royce for doing that to you," I said with a sad smile. "Give him a chance. Who knows, he may be a perfect gentleman with you."

"Thanks, Bella. We'll see what happens," Rose said.

We finished our dinner and headed back to the car. When we got settled in Alice's Audi, I sent a quick text to Edward.

*The room is ours on Friday! - B*

*Hallelujah! Oh the possibilities. Where do you want to go for your birthday dinner? - E*

*I really like Baci's but you know the area better than me. What do you suggest?  
- B*

## La Cantante

*Baci's sounds good to me. - E*

*Am I going to see you tonight? - B*

*Probably not. I'm meeting with my biochem lab partner. We need to write up our lab assignment from yesterday. I'm struggling - E*

*Sorry, bello :( - B*

*It's okay, beautiful. I just can't wrap my head around biochem. ARGH! - E*

*I'd help if I could, but I'd be just as lost as you - B*

*Thanks for the offer, baby. Just texting you has given my brain a boost. See you bright and early tomorrow. Xoxo - E*

*Buona notte xoxo - B*

*Buona notte, my beautiful Bella - E*

We had returned to Patterson. I had some reading I needed to get done for U.S. History before I could head to bed. I took a quick shower and settled in bed to read my chapter. I finished my U.S. History reading and decided to do some recreational reading. I pulled out my worn copy of *Wuthering Heights* and read until I felt my eyes droop. I closed my book and turned off my lights and went to sleep.

xx LC xx

Thursday was my birthday.

*Crap.*

I had woken up to Alice bouncing on my bed. She had wished me a happy birthday. I groaned. I really hated celebrating my birthday. I grumbled as I got ready for the day. Edward met me with my usual cup of coffee. We walked to

## La Cantante

Aural Harmony. I was very quiet. The caffeine was not cutting it this morning. We walked into our classroom and I laid my head onto Edward's shoulder. I was actually almost asleep when Larry came in with James.

*James is nasty. I needs to stop undressing me with his eyes.*

I was hoping that James would behave himself today with it being my birthday and all. However, it was no such luck. He was still being a smarmy bastard. I linked my arm with Edward's and tried to hide myself behind his body. Edward gave me a peculiar look. I nodded in James' direction. Edward whipped his head around and saw James staring. Edward growled, tensed his body and narrowed his eyes. I tugged on his sleeve and laid my hand on his forearm. He relaxed but he was still giving James an evil sneer. James visibly shrank back and ignored us for the rest of the class.

After Aural Harmony, Edward headed to his biochem lab. He needed to meet with his lab partner, Eric Yorkie, to combine their lab report before the class. I headed to my practice room and rehearse my material from my piano lesson on Wednesday and vocal lesson on Tuesday. I spent an hour in the practice room before heading back to my room for a little bit. I relished in the quiet time of the empty room. I set up my cell phone alarm and took a quick nap.

After my very refreshing nap, I worked on my Italian homework before heading to U.S. History. I walked to my U.S. History class by way of The Cage. I picked up a cup of coffee for myself and some coffee and a bagel for Edward. When I entered the classroom, Edward was talking to Jasper. He looked very frustrated. I slunk down into the chair next to him. I put the coffee and bagel in front of him. He pulled me into a tight hug and kissed me enthusiastically.

"You read my mind, beautiful! Thank you so much," he beamed.

"You're quite welcome. Hi, Jasper," I said with a wave. "Alice told me that you and she are going on Friday. Where are you going?"

"Yeah, Jasper. Where are you going?" Edward asked coldly.

## La Cantante

"Umm, McFinnigans and then to this comedy club," Jasper sputtered. "Is that okay?"

"Jas, I'm just teasing you," Edward replied as he clapped Jasper on the shoulder. "Just act like a gentleman and try not to get into her pants and we'll be good."

"Got it," Jasper said with relief. "Is kissing okay?"

"That's entirely up to Alice," Edward laughed.

"Okay. Happy Birthday, Bella, by the way," Jasper drawled. "Are you doing anything special for your birthday?"

"Not today. Edward and I have rehearsal," I said as I rolled my eyes. A stipulation of my scholarship was my participation in two vocal ensembles. I knew I made it into University Singers. The second ensemble I had wanted to join was the women's group. However, it didn't fit in my schedule. I had to settle with Emerson Express, the school's show choir.

"Not fan of the Express, I take it," Jasper chortled.

"Not really. I'm excited to perform in any way possible. However, walking on a flat surface poses a threat to me. Dancing is definitely not much better. I did it in high school but I was always in the back," I mumbled.

"You'll be fine, beautiful. I'll try to swing it that you are my partner. It's all in the leading," Edward said confidently.

"I hope you are not attached to your toes," I replied. "Me in character shoes, sparkly dress and big poofed hair is not attractive."

"I beg to differ. We'll see how you do tonight." Edward gave me a chaste kiss and then dug into his bagel and coffee.

## La Cantante

U.S. History was, surprise, surprise, very boring. We were told that we had an exam in two weeks. Edward, Jasper and I decided to meet up the night before for a study group. After U.S. History, Edward headed to calculus and I went to the library. I wanted to finish up my educational philosophy paper before Emerson Express. I was walking to the library and my phone shrilled from my pocket. I checked the caller ID before picking up.

"Hi, Mom," I said. "I see you got my new number."

"Yes, I did. I can't believe Jake would do that. Asshole," she grumbled.

"To what do I owe the pleasure, Renee?"

"Happy Birthday, sweetheart!" She squealed.

"Thanks, Mom," I said as I blushed.

"Are you doing anything special tonight?"

"Not really. I have rehearsal from 5 until 7, then homework. Edward and I are going out to dinner tomorrow evening," I replied.

"So, tell me about Edward. Is he cute? Is he taking good care of you? Are you being careful?" Renee gushed.

"Christ, Mom! Breathe! Edward is insanely handsome. He's about 6'2", has reddish, brown hair. It almost looks like it is a combination of bronze and copper. It's so different. He has the greenest eyes, the color of jade. He's slender, but built. Not muscle-y like Emmett. Actually, he lives with Emmett. He's a floor above me. Edward is taking great care of me. He's very attentive and extremely romantic. I also feel very safe when I'm with him.

"We are being careful. Seeing as we've only been dating for less than a week, haven't had any time to ourselves and both living in triples. The opportunity has not arisen."

## La Cantante

"Oh, my baby girl is in love!" Renee exclaimed.

"I think I am. I'm afraid to say it to him, though. I don't want to scare him off. I never felt this way before. When we touch, it's like my skin erupts in a million tingles. My body turns into a livewire. It's amazing! He's also a musician. He's in a band, Breaking Midnight. He's also in University Singers, Emerson Express and we're in music theory and aural harmony together."

"I'm so happy for you, Bella!"

"Me too, Mom. Anyhow, I got to go. I have to finish writing a paper before rehearsal tonight. I love you and I'll call you this weekend," I said.

"I love you, too. Happy Birthday!"

I ended the call and went into the library. I shook my head at my mom. She was a wonderful person, but a bit of a scatterbrain. When I lived with her, I was the parent. I took care of her. I cooked. I cleaned. I balanced the checkbook. If I didn't, then we would have starved, lived in a pigsty and the bills would never have gotten paid. She was fun, though. She definitely was my best friend.

I settled into a study cube and pulled out my laptop and continued working on my educational philosophy paper. I had a good start to it from yesterday. I worked on it for a few hours before my stomach made its presence known. I pulled out a granola bar and munched on it as I edited my paper. I saved it to my flash drive and logged into a computer in the computer lab. I printed out my paper and put it into my bag. I checked the time and dashed to Brandon.

As I walking past one of the academic building I slammed into some poor, unsuspecting soul. I fell on my ass and set my bag flying. I heard a velvety chuckle. I looked up through my lashes and saw Edward trying to contain is laughter.

"That's okay. I'm on the ground on my ass with my shit sprawled everywhere. Laugh. I'm glad you find my clumsiness humorous," I snapped.



## La Cantante

He reached down with his hand and pulled me up. He then crouched down and picked up my messenger bag and the various items that fell out of the pockets. I dusted off the dirt off my ass and inspected myself for any injuries. My right wrist was a bit sore, but no big deal.

"Sorry, Bella. You really weren't kidding when moving on a smooth, flat surface," he snorted.

I narrowed my eyes and held out my hand for my bag. He shook his head as he brought it over his head and laced his fingers through mine. We walked to Brandon together.

"Are you okay, Bella? That was a nasty fall," he said with concern in his eyes.

"I'm fine. My butt is a little sore and I broke my fall with my wrist. It's nothing that I haven't dealt with before. When you are clumsy like me, being bruised and limpy is par for the course. I'm thinking I should make t-shirts that say 'SuperGimp,'" I replied.

"You make 'em, I'll buy one. Because, you're my gimp," Edward replied with a kiss to my forehead. "Are you going to be alright for Express? We'll probably be dancing today. Typically we learn a song and then choreography for the song."

"I'll be fine. Don't worry about me," I pressed.

"I'll always worry about you, Isabella. I lo...I want to make sure you're safe."

*Whoa! Did he almost say that he loved me? Holy Crow!*

"I'm perfectly fine," I whispered. "Let's go dance!"

He nodded and we entered the doors that led us to the stage. Emerson Express was a small ensemble of thirty-two singers. There were eight singers on each vocal part. We walked up the aisle to the stairs to allow us access to the stage. There were a few singers that I recognized from University Singers. Tyler

## La Cantante

Crowley, Tia and Senna stuck out immediately. I also recognized another tenor, Mike Newton and another bass, Ben Cheney. They were all talking in small clumps on the stage. There was a small combo of instrumentalists on the stage as well. There was a keyboardist, drummer, guitar, bass and a few horns. They appeared to be tuning their instruments. We dropped our bags in the seats in the auditorium and climbed the stairs to the stage.

As we got on stage, the director of the show choir, a very tall and very gay man named Felix, strode over to the combo and gave them some music. He then passed out the music to us. "River Deep, Mountain High."

*Awesome song!*

"Good evening ladies and gentleman. I hope you had a great summer. I know I did. I married my partner, Demetri and I couldn't be happier. However, that will not prevent me from riding your asses to make people smile with our cavity-inducing sweetness that is Emerson Express. For those of you who don't know me, I'm Felix. I am God in the world of Emerson Express. I choreograph. I arrange your parts. I make all of the decisions for this group. You are merely my minions. However, we will have fun, damn it! We work hard and we play hard too! We do have a couple overnight performances. You'll get the schedule of performances at our next rehearsal. However, for now, I want to warm you up, learn this music, take a brief break and learn the choreography," Felix barked.

We did a quick vocal warm up. We then sight read through the piece of music. It was pretty straight forward. There was some difficult chords, but with some rote learning, we got them down. After about forty-five minutes, Felix gave us a break. He told us to put on some comfortable clothes, if we had them. If not, be prepared to sweat next time. After our break, Felix put us into an opening formation. I was paired up with Mike Newton. He looked absolutely giddy. Edward was with Senna. She appeared to be yelling at him as they were working through the opening steps. I didn't pay that much attention as I was struggling with the choreography. Mike got his toes stepped on several times.

"Sorry, Mike. I'm a bit of a klutz," I mumbled.

## La Cantante

"It's no big deal, Isabella. I don't mind my toes getting stepped on by you," he said as he fluttered his eyes at me.

*Are you kidding me?*

"It's Bella," I corrected.

"Right, Bella. Did you know that Bella means 'beautiful,' in Italian?" he flirted. "I'm in my second year of Italian. I could teach you some phrases."

"That's okay, Mike. I'm in Italian right now as well. I'm good," I answered curtly.

"Perhaps I can tutor you," he pressed.

*Will he get a clue? NOT INTERESTED!*

"I really need to pay attention to Felix, Mike. I'm struggling and you're not really helping," I explained.

"Fine," he said with a resigned sigh.

We learned the opening section of the song and then Felix moved us to a new formation. I was paired up with Edward. I was happy. When we got to the new formation, I took my spot next to him. He seemed distant and a bit pissed off.

"Is everything okay, Edward?" I asked quietly.

"Not really. I'll tell you after rehearsal. I should have told you yesterday, but I didn't get a chance. I'm sorry," he apologized.

"Why are you apologizing? You haven't done anything," I reasoned.

"I'm just apologizing for the situation, that's all. I saw Mike drooling all over you," Edward said with a pointed look.

## La Cantante

"Uh, yeah. Ew. He would not take a hint," I said with a small shudder.

"Besides, why would he flirting with me. That girl, Jessica appears to have the hots for him."

"When will you see yourself clearly, Bella? You're gorgeous. I'm holding onto my control by a paper-thin line. All I want to do with you is pull you into a dark corner and have my wicked way with you," he said with eyes darkened with lust.

"What's stopping you?" I responded seductively.

"That tall, gay man, Felix. I really can't wait until tomorrow, Isabella," he whispered in my ear. His breath caused me goose bumps and gave me tingles.

"We better pay attention. I saw you stumbling over with Mike. I'm not helping you right now by distracting you."

"I'd rather be distracted by you than do this," I muttered.

"Me too, baby."

Edward was a very patient partner. I actually learned the choreography with him much faster than the first part. We learned two more formations before the end of rehearsal. I was paired up with Ben and thankfully ended up with Edward. At the end of the piece, Edward and I were placed into an intricate lift. I was hesitant to do it. Knowing my luck, I'd miss a hand-hold and cause Edward to injure himself. Edward actually knew the lift and easily hefted me into it. I was placed on his shoulder and cradled by his arm. I balanced myself by holding onto the opposite shoulder and raised my other arm above my head. Felix reasoned that I was tiny, Edward could do it easily. He did. We ran the piece three times before the end of the rehearsal. I was actually pretty comfortable with the choreography. My only concern was the lift at the end and Edward did it every time perfectly.

"Fabulous rehearsal, Express! There are a few rough spots in the choreography but I'll fix those before next Thursday. You'll also get your performance schedule and will be measured for your costumes. Guys, you're pretty easy."

## La Cantante

Tuxedos with vests, no bow ties, though. We're using ties this year. It'll look much sharper. Ladies, your dresses are lavender with iridescent sequins and flesh toned character shoes. They are so adorable. You will need to get your own spankies, though. I have a store in town that is ordering them for me. I'll let you know when they are in," Felix said enthusiastically. "See you next week, Express."

Edward and I went to retrieve our bags. He picked up my fleece and held it up for me to put on. He then put on his jacket and laced our fingers.

"Hey Cullen! We're heading to The Cage for some dinner. You wanna come?" Ben Cheney asked.

Edward looked at me. I gave him a sleepy smile. I was actually exhausted from the rehearsal. The choreography that Felix gave us was much more intricate than the dances we performed in my show choir in high school. I could already feel my legs and stomach muscles get tight. I needed to head back to my dorm room and stretch.

Edward brushed my hair behind my ear. "No, thanks, Cheney. It's my girl's birthday and I want to spend some quality time with her. I'm also starting to get tight from all of the moving around. I'm just going to head back to my room," he replied.

"Who's your girlfriend?" Ben asked.

Edward answered the question to Ben's question by kissing me. Ben chuckled. "Happy Birthday, Bella. Have fun. See you both later."

Edward's phone rang as we were heading back to Patterson. He picked up, "What's up, Whitlock?"

He and Jasper spoke for a few minutes before turning to me. He had a sparkle in his eye.

"What are you up to, Cullen?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"Jasper is down by Alice and Emmett is doing some athletic training thing with the football guys. We have some time in my room to hang out before we're invaded. I can give my beautiful girlfriend her birthday present," he said with an impish grin.

"Edward," I whined, "You got me the phone. I don't need anything else."

"Who said I bought you anything," he replied with a suggestive wiggle to his brows.

*Oh...OH! Alone time with Edward. Perfect present!*

I slowly smiled in understanding and we both starting walking more quickly back to Patterson. We reached it in no time at all. We climbed the stairs to the third floor. Edward led me down to his dorm room. He unlocked the door and led me inside. His dorm room was the same layout as mine. The beds were arranged differently, but it was the same room. Edward slipped my messenger bag off of my shoulders and led me to his bed. I took off my jacket and put it on his desk chair. Edward did the same.

"Sit," Edward commanded as he pointed to the bed. I looked at him confusedly. He moved me to the bed and lightly pushed me onto his bed. He sat behind me and began massaging my shoulders.

*Oh, that feels SOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO good! Can you follow me around and do that forever? Please?*

"We should stretch out after rehearsal. However as I was lifting you, I could feel how tense you were and you need this. You need to relax as I lift you. It'll make it easier for both of us," he explained.

"When you're done, in an hour or so, I'll massage your shoulders," I teased.

"An hour? Are you kidding me? I have strong fingers, but I don't think I can last an hour, Bella," Edward whined.

## La Cantante

"I was kidding. Jeez. Relax," I said as I rolled my head, causing my neck to crack.

"Holy crap, Bella. You should see a chiropractor," Edward admonished.

"I'll put it on my to-do list. Can you rub in between my shoulder blades? Please?"

He traveled down my back to in between my shoulder blades and massaged there. His fingers were very strong and got out all of the knots as he worked over my back. He then began lightly scratching my back after the massage. It felt so good. I was slowly turning into a puddle of goo. He then rested his hands on the top of my shoulders and put his chin on top of one his hands.

"I know it's your birthday and all, but can you return the favor?" he asked as some hair flopped onto his forehead. I ruffled his hair and nodded.

"You had to lift my fat ass. It's the least I can do," I replied.

"Seriously, Bella? You weigh like nothing. It was more the usage of muscles that I don't normally use," he retorted.

"Whatever. Switch with me," I said as I stood up. He scooted forward on the bed and I sat behind him on my knees. I began massaging his shoulders and his head rolled forward.

"Damn. That feels amazing. Can you do that forever?" Edward sighed.

I chuckled, "I was thinking the same thing when you were rubbing my shoulders."

I continued massaging Edward's back and shoulders. I also did some light scratching. He leaned into my touch and almost purred. "God, Bella. Talk about magical fingers."

## La Cantante

I finished my massage for Edward and leaned back on his pillows. He turned his body so he was facing me. "So what was Senna saying about me?" I asked bluntly.

"You saw that? Shit," he responded as he ran his hand through his hair. "She pretty much gave me an earful about how much she hated you and that you took her job."

I looked down to my hands which were folded in my lap. I knew that being such a young section leader would cause ripples. I didn't realize how many. "Alice warned me about Senna. I kind of knew she was going to go bat-shit crazy. I'm just having a hard time not taking it personally."

"You shouldn't. She's jealous. Tia's jealous. They're all jealous. Fuck 'em," Edward stated simply.

"Easier said than done, Edward. However, I'll try," I responded quietly.

Edward lay down on his pillows and pulled me to his chest. I snuggled against his muscular torso. I could still smell his cologne and something that was pure Edward. He lightly scratched my back. As we were lying there, I could feel my eyelids become droopy. I wrapped my arm around his waist and burrowed myself closer to Edward. I looked at the clock before closing my eyes. It was 8.

"CULLEN! WHY IS MY SISTER IN YOUR BED?" Emmett screamed.

I jumped a foot and actually fell out of the bed. "Ow! Shit!" I bellowed.

Edward scrambled up and helped me off the floor. He looked confused and half-asleep. "Christ, Em. We fell asleep after Express rehearsal. Are you okay, Bella?"

"No," I grumbled. I walked over to my brother and smacked him upside the head and hit him a few times on his arms and elbowed him in the stomach. I glanced at the clock and saw that it was a little after 11.



## La Cantante

"What the fuck, Bella?" he boomed.

"Now I'm better," I said as I went back to Edward's bed and curled back up on the pillows.

I heard a bit of scuffling. The door opened and I could hear Emmett yell at Edward in the hallway. I didn't really hear Edward come back in as I think I fell back asleep. I felt him get in the bed behind me and pulled me to his chest and spooned with me.

"Beautiful, as much as I want to spend the entire night cuddling with you, you need to go to your room. Emmett is ready to feed me my balls, covered in chocolate sauce. I've never seen him so pissed," Edward said as he brushed my hair off of my face. He kissed along my jaw and nibbled on my ear.

"Don't wanna. Too tired to move," I mumbled. "I slept the best ever when I was with you."

"Me too, beautiful. I think I lasted about five minutes before I zonked out. Seriously, Emmett gave me ten minutes to get up and down to your room before he would turn me into a human pretzel," Edward complained.

"Ugh, fine," I snorted. Edward got up and helped me. He gently cradled my face in his hands. He brought his features up into a crooked grin. "What?"

"I'm getting my sexy librarian tomorrow," he said.

"How red are they?" I groaned.

"Pretty red. As beautiful as your eyes are, I don't want them to be damaged. Wear your glasses tomorrow."

"Yes, dear," I said with a roll of the eyes.

"Come on, lovebirds! I need to go to bed!" Emmett yelled through the door.

## La Cantante

"For the love all that's holy, Emmett! I'm trying to say good night to my beautiful girlfriend," Edward yelled back.

"Your girlfriend is my sister, Cullen. She ain't that beautiful," Emmett replied.

"You suck, Em!" I screamed.

"Love you, Isabelly," he chuckled.

"Can we kill him and dump him in Lake Erie?" I asked.

"My trunk is big enough," Edward laughed. "Sleep. Bed."

I turned to his bed. He grabbed my hand, "YOUR BED. As tempting as that is, you need to go to your bed," Edward chided.

"So responsible. Good night, bello." I said with a kiss.

"Good night, my beautiful girl," he replied against my lips. His tongue slipped through and danced languidly with mine. He pulled my bottom lip with his teeth and groaned. "Bed."

"See you in the morning, Edward," I said as I walked to the door to get my bag. I opened the door and saw Emmett waiting by it. I smacked him a few times and gave him a pointed glare. Emmett gave me a wave. I flipped him the bird and went down to my room. I took a quick shower and got into my cold bed. My phone chirped from my desk.

*My bed is lonely without you, beautiful. Wish you were here - E*

*Me too, baby. Me too - B*

# Birthday Surprise

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*I intend for there to be some citrus in the chapter. It'll be my first, so be kind :)*

## Chapter 15: Birthday Surprise

### EPOV

After Express rehearsal, Bella and I went back to my room. We both gave each other back massages. That girl had some seriously strong hands and fingers. My knots were very thankful for her massaging technique. We then cuddled on my bed. Bella snuggled into my chest and passed out. I couldn't have been happier. I watched her sleep. She held tightly around my waist.

"Edward..." she mumbled.

*Bella talks in her sleep.*

I pulled her closer to my body and kissed the top of her head. She hummed against my torso. "Love you, Edward."

*What? She loves me? Woot woot!*

My heart soared as she made her sleepy admission. She loved me. I ran my hand down through her hair and down her back. I pressed a kiss to her forehead, "I love you so much, Bella Swan." I held her tightly and closed my eyes. The next thing I realized was I heard yelling.

*What. The. Fuck?*

"CULLEN! WHY IS MY SISTER IN YOUR BED?"

I felt Bella jump and heard her fall onto the floor. I was so confused when I went to help her up. I blinked a few times and shook the cobwebs out of my head. I realized that it was Emmett yelling. "Christ, Em. We fell asleep after Express rehearsal. Are you okay, Bella?"

Bella mumbled that she wasn't and then smacked Emmett a few times. "Now I'm better." I laughed at her response. She went back to my bed and burrowed herself into my pillows. I looked at Emmett and he was ready to kick my ass. He grabbed my arm and pulled me into the hallway.

"Cullen, do you not value your manhood? Are not attached to your balls?" he barked.

"Emmett, I happen to like and am very attached to my junk. Lay off. We fell asleep. I didn't try anything. We. Were. Sleeping," I reasoned.

"Right, sure. You were all like cuddled and lovey-like. Why should I believe you?" Emmett asked.

"Because it's the truth. Have you ever known me to lie? Seriously?"

"No."

"Then why would I start now. Emmett, I care for her a lot! Do you see me trying to kill Jas for dating Alice?"

"Ugh, no. I'll behave. I promise. You have ten minutes to get her down to her room, though. She's not sleeping here. I don't think she can handle all of the snoring. After ten minutes, you are being turned into a human pretzel and your head is being stuck in the toilet," Emmett growled.

## La Cantante

"Em, I can barely handle the snoring. Between you and Jas, I surprised that I can sleep at all. Christ!"

"Ten minutes, Cullen."

I rolled my eyes and went back into my room. I curled my body around Bella's in the bed. She snuggled against me.

*This feels so right. I don't want to let her go. Fucking, Emmett!*

I managed to get her upright and coherent. She reluctantly headed downstairs to her room. As soon as she left, I felt this emptiness in my chest. I almost seemed like half my existence left with Bella. I crawled into bed and my sheets and pillows were saturated with Bella's delicious scent. I pulled my pillow close and inhaled. It made happier that she was there in essence, but incredibly sad that she was not there in reality. Before I went to sleep, I sent her quick text.

*My bed is lonely without you, beautiful. Wish you were here - E*

*Me too, baby. Me too. - B*

With that reassurance, I fell into a fitful sleep.

xx LC xx

I woke up the next morning and my body was revolting. My arms and shoulders were so sore. My legs were very tight and I was just plain exhausted. When I rolled out of bed, my back cracked. I heard a deep chuckle. I stretched my sore and tired body before I looked at the source of the chuckle.

Emmett was sitting on the couch in our room eating a bowl of cereal. "You feeling the dance rehearsal today?"

I nodded as I grabbed my towel to shower. I turned to him and looked him. "Emmett, you need to back off Bella and my relationship. You're going to drive

## La Cantante

her away if you keep being an ass," I said sleepily.

"I know. Believe me, I know. I am and I will. I'm going to talk to Isabelly today at The Cage. Are you guys going to be there after your music class?" he asked thoughtfully.

"I think so. However, I do have a question for you," Emmett nodded for me to continue. "Why are you so in my face about our relationship? I've been nothing but respectful, protective and loving. I've done nothing wrong. At least in my eyes."

"You're dating my sister. That's what you're doing wrong. However, shipping her off to a nunnery is not an option. You're the next best thing. You are the prime example of sincerity, goodness, respect and love, Cullen. I've never met a better man than you," he said seriously. "However, you repeat that sentimental crap, I'll still kick your ass. You've treated Bella very well. I think I finally realized that I can trust you. I promise to you and Isabelly that I'll back off. Scouts honor and all that shit."

"Thanks, man. Now all you have to do is tell her. I think she's still pissed at you," I sniggered.

"Probably. I'll talk to her at The Cage. Go shower, Cullen. You 'stank!'" he laughed.

I flipped him the bird as I strode into the bathroom. I took a quick shower and did my normal morning routine. I ran some hair stuff into my tangle of bronze locks.

*Gah! Stupid cowlicks!*

I went back into the dorm room and Emmett was gone. I pulled on some boxers. I reached for my distressed, dark jeans, a green button down and a fleece. I spritzed myself with my cologne and grabbed my bag. I headed to the cafeteria before heading to Bella's room to pick up her coffee. I filled my travel mug and prepared the coffee to Bella's specifications: some cream and a lot of

## La Cantante

sugar. I headed back to Patterson and went to Bella's room. I knocked on the door. Bella opened it up and she looked exhausted as well. Her hair was pulled back into a ponytail and she had her glasses on. She had on a pair of jeans, the Emerson hoodie I had gotten her and pair of navy Chucks. I held out the cup of coffee and she took a long draw from it. Bella swung her bag over her head and we walked to Brandon Hall.

"Moving a little slowly today, Bella?" I chuckled.

"My muscles are revolting. I'm so sore. What I wouldn't give for a hot tub right now," she groaned.

"You and me both, beautiful. I'm hurting too. I also couldn't fall asleep to save my life," I replied.

"Me either. I felt so lonely," she murmured. "Who'd thought that a three hour nap would make us addicted to sleeping with each other?"

"Definitely not me. I never want to sleep without you again. Unfortunately, that may not happen as often as we like. I'm so tempted to see if I can get an off-campus apartment for second semester," I mused.

"I like having you right above me. It's nice."

"Who said I'd be living alone?" I said with a quirked eyebrow.

"What? OH! Are you serious?" Bella surprisingly asked.

"As a funeral," I replied. We had reached Brandon and headed into the theory classroom. This week of class was review of everything I knew and I would definitely be looking forward to learning some new material. I still took meticulous notes and glared at James. He was still eye-fucking my girlfriend.

*Back off, buddy.*

## La Cantante

After a very uneventful theory class, Bella and I headed to The Cage. She got in line while I got us a table. I took out my laptop and logged into my email program. I was happy to see a response from Garrett, my former choral director from high school.

*To: Edward Cullen*

*From: Garrett Sisko*

*Re: Favor*

*Dear Edward,*

*It's so nice to hear from you! I really miss you in choir. It sucks having to play the piano for rehearsal. I could always rely on you to step in when I needed to conduct. I hope things are going well for you. I can only assume that they are. Girlfriend? I hope she keeps you in line!*

*In regards to her observation hours, I'd be more than happy to work with her. I'm assuming she's a music education major or else you would not have contacted me. I am giving you my cell phone number. Have your girlfriend give me a call and we'll figure something out. Perhaps you can come with her and be my accompanist for a day or two.*

*Cheers!*

*Garrett*

*716 - 555 - 3471 - Cell Phone*

I beamed at Garrett's response. He may have been my high school choral director, but he was definitely a friend. I typed a quick response saying I would do what he said and I shut down my computer. As I was finishing my email, Emmett came in and dropped his bag in a chair. He got in line, passing Bella on his way. She shot daggers at him.



## La Cantante

*She's still pissed at him.*

She handed me a cup of coffee, breakfast sandwich and hash browns. She took out some water, bagel and fruit for her. She was grumbling as she ate her breakfast. She shot furious glances to Emmett in line and he visibly shrank back. I laughed at their interaction. Who would have thought that huge Emmett was afraid of his sister?

"I got a response from Garrett," I said conversationally.

"Garrett?" she asked confused.

"My former choral director. Garrett Sisko. He said that he'd be happy to have you do your observation hours with him. He said to call him. Here's his cell phone number," I said as I slipped Bella a slip of paper with Garrett's number.

"Awesome! Thank you so much! I'll call him after University Singers!" she exclaimed as she programmed the number into her phone. She gave me a brief kiss after she put her phone back into her pocket.

Emmett came to our table with a huge tray of breakfast food. He plopped down in the chair next to Bella. She glared at him. He began eating his food in silence. I kicked him in the shin underneath the table and gave him a pointed stare. He looked at me sheepishly. I nodded toward Bella who was still eating her breakfast, ignoring Emmett.

"Uh, Isabelly," he began, "I wanted to apologize for how I've been acting lately. I've been a complete dick. You're a grown woman and are fully capable of making your own decisions. I'm backing off of your relationship with Edward."

She blinked a few times in disbelief. She open and closed her mouth a few times before taking her glasses off and rubbing her eyes. She shook her head in disbelief. "Am I dreaming, Edward?" she asked.

"Uh, no. We're quite awake," I laughed.

## La Cantante

"Bella, I have been protective of you since you were born. I told Edward this morning, if I can't ship you off to a nunnery, he's the next best thing. Cullen is the epitome of sincerity, kindness, respect and love. He's the best man I know. Besides myself. You're both okay in my book. However, be careful. Both of you. I don't want to be an uncle at 21, thank you very much."

"Holy shit!" Bella said. She began laughing hysterically. "You're serious?" she asked in between giggles.

Emmett nodded and took a huge bite of his bagel. "Deadly serious. I love you, Bella. I want you happy. Edward obviously makes you happy," he mumbled with his mouth full.

Bella shot out of her seat and threw her arms around Emmett. "Thank you, brother bear. If you had kept up the protective crap, I would have kicked your ass! I love you, Emmy!"

He wrapped his huge arms around Bella and embraced her. He then pulled on her ponytail and she pulled away. She smiled at him and then turned to smile at me. When she sat down, I grabbed her hand and kissed her knuckles. We finished our breakfast. Bella headed to her education class and I headed to biochemistry.

The rest of the day was pretty quiet. Biochemistry was confusing. No surprise there. I texted Alice after class and verified that we did have the room for the evening. She said yes and that we were going out to eat, ALL of us on Saturday for Bella's birthday. We were going to a nicer restaurant, La Bella Italia. Alice made reservations for the six of us.

*Thanks, pixie!*

University Singers was interesting. We ran the piece that we had sectionals on Wednesday. As thought, the sopranos and tenors had their parts down. Eleazar was extraordinarily pleased. The basses and altos were a hot mess. We spent most of the rehearsal with them relearning their parts. It was very frustrating. Eleazar also informed the choir of a performance opportunity after

## La Cantante

Thanksgiving that would result in a brief overnight trip.

After choral rehearsal, Alice kidnapped Bella. She wanted to make her beautiful for her birthday dinner. Bella had a panicked look on her face, very similar to the one when I first met her. I gave her a kiss and let my midget sister abduct my girlfriend. I headed out to my Volvo and went to the mall. I know that I had purchased the phone for Bella but I wanted to get her something special for her birthday. I walked into a jewelry store and perused the cases. I didn't really see what I wanted so I went elsewhere. I went to five different jewelry stores and found nothing. I was ready to give up when I saw a different store. I went in and there were a ton of charms. It hit me! A charm bracelet would be perfect. I purchased a silver bracelet with five charms: a music note, a sapphire, an apple, an eagle (Emerson's mascot) and a heart. I was ecstatic with my present for my Bella.

I drove back to the dorm and got ready for Bella's birthday dinner with me. I pulled on a pair of black dress pants, a black button up shirt and a pinstriped vest. I slipped on a black jacket, ran my hand through my hair, grabbed her present and headed down to her room. We had reservations for five and it was about 4:30. I was very nervous about tonight. I wanted Bella to have a good time. I wanted to make her birthday special. I only hope I could rise up to the challenge.

I got down to her room and I knocked on the closed door. Rosalie opened the door and slipped outside. "Your sister is a menace with a curling iron and make up," she giggled. "Bella's almost ready."

"How long has she been held captive?" I asked as I cringed.

"Since we got back from University Singers. That girl has every cream, make up brush and cosmetic known to the human race. Christ! I thought I was bad. My make up collection is nothing compared to hers. How do your parents handle her?"

"What makes you think that Alice can be 'handled?'" I asked with a sardonic grin.

## La Cantante

"Good point. So where are you taking Bella?"

"Baci's. It's where we had our first 'date.' I thought you were going to your parents' house?" I asked.

"I am. I'm leaving in a little bit. I'll be back for her dinner tomorrow. I just need to pick up a few things from home. Have fun tonight, Edward," she said with a small smile.

"I intend to. Rose? I do have a question for you. Do you think Bella will like her present?" I asked

"Didn't you get her the phone?" she asked.

"Originally, but I wanted something more romantic so I got her this," I said as I took out the bracelet. Rose's face broke into a radiant grin. She nodded emphatically. I quickly put the bracelet back in my pocket and the door opened up.

Bella walked out hesitantly. Her hair was curled and pulled off of her face into a side ponytail. She had some make up on, but not overly so. She was wearing a royal blue wrap dress with some teal green and white accents. She had on a blue necklace and her sapphire earrings. She had on a pair of black Mary Jane heels and wore a white wrap.

"You look beautiful, *Il mio cantante*," I said reverently.

"Thank you, Edward. If I don't fall on my butt in these shoes, it'll be a miracle," she said softly.

"I'll catch you," I said as I gripped my arm around her waist. I pressed a kiss to her temple and reveled in her smell. She smelled exquisite. I nuzzled her hair and we headed out. I held Bella's hand in the crook of my elbow. As we were leaving, we ran into Angela, Bella's RA.

"Wow, Bella! You look gorgeous! What are you all dolled up for?" she asked.

## La Cantante

"Edward is taking me out for my birthday," she said with a smile.

"Where are you guys going?" Angela asked.

"Baci's," I replied.

"Have fun tonight! Try their tiramisu. It's to die for," Angela gushed.

"That sounds really good. Thanks for the suggestion, Angela. See you later," Bella beamed.

"Happy Birthday, Bella. Bye, Edward."

We walked out to my car and I chivalrously opened the door for my Bella. I jogged to the other side and got in. I started the car and we headed to Baci's. I stopped the car in front of the valet stand and let him park my car. We moved slowly to the entrance and were greeted by the hostess. Thankfully it was a different one from last Saturday.

"Welcome to Baci's. Table for two?" she asked pleasantly.

"Actually, I have a reservation. It's under Cullen," I responded politely.

"Here it is. A private room," she said with a look of awe. "This way, Mr. Cullen. Mrs. Cullen."

Bella gasped at the women's gaff. I didn't want to correct her. I really liked that she assumed that Bella was my wife. I was definitely thinking that she would be eventually. The hostess led us to a small, private dining room in the rear of the restaurant. It had a small table in the center of the room that was covered with a red checked table cloth. In the center of the table was a candle. I led Bella into the room with my hand on the small of her back. I pulled out her chair and she quickly settled into it. I sank into my own chair and smiled.

"This is too much, Edward. A private dining room?" she said.

## La Cantante

"I wanted to be alone with you. It's not a big deal, beautiful," I replied softly. I reached across the table and held her hand. "You deserve the best, remember?"

She snorted and rolled her eyes. The waiter strode in and took our orders. I ordered lasagna and Bella got seafood marinara. He offered us some wine and I was tempted. However, I decided against it. I didn't want to get pulled over on her birthday and get arrested for underage drinking.

"I called Garrett as I was being attacked by a curling iron today," Bella said as she sipped her water. "We made tentative plans for me to come in the next few Fridays. Can you drive me?"

"I'd be happy to. If I can't, I'll just let you take my car. I will come with you the first time you go so you know where to go," I said with a smile.

"Thank you for contacting him for me. I didn't feel comfortable contacting a perfect stranger and asking to do observation hours," she reasoned.

"It was not a problem, Bella. I'd do anything for you. You must understand that," I said fervently.

"Thank you. Truly."

"My pleasure, Isabella."

The waiter returned with our food. We ate dinner with quiet conversation. I asked her about her classes that she had without me. She enjoyed them. She showed me a picture of her psychology professor and I laughed. He was a total nerd. She asked me about my classes. I groaned. I really hated my pre-med courses. I was struggling with biochemistry. I had a meeting set up with my professor to try to assist me next week. The waiter had returned and took away our dinner plates. He asked if we wanted dessert. Bella wanted to try the tiramisu. He scurried away to get the dessert. When I had made the reservation I had informed the restaurant that we were celebrating a birthday. He returned with a slice of the Italian delicacy with a candle atop of it. The full wait staff followed him. They sang 'Happy Birthday' to Bella's chagrin. She was blushing

## La Cantante

furiously and giving me a stink eye. I smiled sweetly as I sung. She blew out her candle and the wait staff left.

"What did you wish for, beautiful?" I asked.

"It already came true. I wished for you," she said timidly.

I got up out of my seat and fell to one knee in front of her. I gave her a sweet and loving kiss. She tugged on my hair and I wrapped my hands around her waist. I pulled away and I looked at her beautiful, deep brown eyes. I cradled her face and rubbed circles on cheeks. "Bella, there is something that I want to tell you. I'm afraid that you might think that I'm rushing things but I can't deny what I feel in my heart. I love you. I think I loved you from the moment you ran into me on Saturday. I definitely know that I loved you when we sang together on Saturday night. I love you so much," I said, my voice thick with emotion and unshed tears. "I'll understand if you are not ready to say it in return, but I needed to let you know."

Bella's eyes filled with tears and her face broke into an enormous grin. She leaned in and kissed me. I could feel the tears falling down her cheeks. They were mixed with mine. I never felt something so deep with anyone. She pulled away from me and she ran her fingers down my cheek. "I love you, too, Edward. I never, ever felt such a pull to someone."

I got off of my knees and pulled Bella to my chair and settled her on my lap. I reached into my jacket pocket and pulled out the bracelet box and presented it to her. "I know I said that the phone was your birthday present, but you deserve something more romantic. I intend to spoil you. Please accept this, baby."

She gave me a look. I responded with a dazzling smile as I pushed the box into her hands. She opened it up and gasped. She lightly fingered each of the charms. "It's beautiful, Edward. What do the charms mean?"

"The music note is for your love of music, the apple is for your major of being a music teacher, the sapphire is your birthstone, the eagle is Emerson's mascot which is where we met and the heart is mine. You've captured my heart," I said

## La Cantante

as I took the bracelet out of the box and put it around her slender wrist. She turned the bracelet and tears fell down her cheeks. I lightly touched her cheeks and she gave me a radiant smile. "Do you like it, my Bella?"

"I love it. I love you," she said as she pressed a kiss to my lips.

"I love you more, my beautiful Isabella," I whispered against her lips. "Do you want to get out of here?"

She nodded as she peppered kisses along my jaw and ran her hands along my torso. "Don't forget the dessert. I'm going to run to the bathroom. Be right back," she said as she hopped off of my lap. The waiter was walking in as she left. I asked for a to-go box and the check. He ran off and quickly returned with a box and check. I slipped my credit card into the black folder and handed it back to him.

Bella came back and slid onto my lap. I idly played with her hair as we waited for the check. The waiter returned and handed me the black folder. I pulled out the credit card and handed it to Bella as I signed the credit slip. I placed the folder on the table and lightly swatted Bella's ass to get her to stand. She got up and handed me my credit card and I put it back in my wallet. I grabbed the bag with the dessert and we headed to the exit. The valet pulled up my car and we both slid into the warm car. We headed back to Patterson in a comfortable silence, enjoying each other's love.

xx LC xx

Bella and I went into her dorm room. It was completely quiet. I knew that Alice and Jasper were at McFinnigans and at some comedy club. Rose was on her way back to her parents' home. She closed the door behind her and put her wrap and purse on her desk. She gave me a sheepish look. "Do you want to watch a movie or something?"

I nodded, suddenly very nervous. She walked over to her bookcase and pointed to the movies. "Why don't you choose one? I'm going to change."



## La Cantante

I slipped off my jacket and vest and rolled my sleeves of my shirt. I looked at Bella's movie collection. She had a variety of movies. I pulled off *Mr. Holland's Opus* and set it up in the DVD player. I slipped off my shoes and lay down on her bed. I picked up a book off her desk and was thumbing through it as I waited for her. I heard her putter around in the bathroom. She walked out of the bathroom and she was wearing a pair of jeans and a tight black tank top. Her hair was out of the ponytail and was hanging down her shoulders. She went to her closet and pulled out a black hoodie and came to her bed. She sat down on it and faced me.

"What did you pick, handsome?" she asked.

"*Mr. Holland's Opus*," I said with a crooked smile. "It's one of my favorite movies."

"Mine too. However, I also love *Shawshank Redemption*. Perhaps we could watch that next time," she said.

I nodded and pulled her to me. I was on my side, behind her. She grabbed the remote and turned off the lights. She started the movie and she cuddled against my chest. I wrapped my arm around her waist and pulled her closer. She laced her fingers with mine and we settled in to watch the movie. About halfway through the movie, Bella turned to face me. I smiled at her.

"What, gorgeous?" I asked.

"I just can't believe how lucky I am," she said as she kissed my nose.

"I'm the lucky one, Bella. I love you so much," I responded as I ran my hand through her soft, chestnut tresses. I leaned in to kiss her. I brushed my lips against hers. I moved my hands down to her hips and pulled them closer to me. She ran her hands up my chest and went to my hair. She tugged forcefully and it caused tingles throughout my body. It went straight to my dick. I could feel myself harden as we kissed. Her tongue licked my bottom lip and I pulled it into my mouth. I angled my head and deepened the kiss. Bella's legs intertwined with mine. I could feel her heat against my thigh. My hands

traveled further south to her ass.

"Edward," she moaned.

"I love you, baby. You feel so good," I groaned in response.

"I love you, too." Bella's hands disentangled themselves from my hair and went to my shirt. She pulled away and asked permission with her eyes. I gave a small nod and she began unbuttoning my shirt. My breathing was becoming more labored with each button she released. Pretty soon, my shirt was untucked from my pants and completely unbuttoned. Bella's soft hands ran over my torso. I felt the muscles contract under her feather light touch. She leaned in and pressed several kisses to my collarbones and kissed up my neck. She sucked right under my earlobe and my hips bucked reflexively.

"Bella..." I rasped.

"You are so beautiful, Edward," she whispered against my skin. I gently cupped her chin and I crashed my lips against hers. My hands traveled up her body and I tangled my hands in her hair. I kissed down her neck and bit down on her ear. She gave a small scream. I pulled away and tried to regulate my unsteady breathing.

"Bella, can I touch you?" I asked. I didn't want to assume anything. I wanted to make sure that she was okay with what I wanted to do. She looked up at me with wide eyes. I gently caressed her face and kissed her forehead. She gave me a tentative nod. I gently pushed the hoodie off of her shoulders. She also did the same for my shirt. She ran her hands over my chest as I began my exploration of her body. I ran my hands down her arms and up her belly. She giggled.

"That tickles, Edward," she said as she kissed my shoulder.

"Sorry, beautiful," I replied as I placed my hands under her tank top and felt her skin on her abdomen for the first time. "Your skin is so soft, Bella." She blushed and ducked her head between my head and shoulder. She placed

## La Cantante

feather-light kisses there. I ran my hands, over her clothes up her torso. I touched the underside of her breasts and she brought in a sharp intake of breath. "Is this alright?"

Bella nodded and pulled away. She took my hand and gently placed it on her breast. It fit so perfectly in my hand. I gently palmed it and felt the nipple harden under my touch. I flicked with my thumb. I kept my eyes fixed on hers. I wanted her to know that she can trust me. I wanted her to know that I would never hurt her. I leaned in and gave her a chaste kiss and rolled her onto her back. I was hovering over her. My hand was still on breast and I caressed the perfect mound. Bella's hands traveled from my chest and moved to my back. She ran her nails along my back and I hissed. It felt so good.

I pushed away and looked at Bella. Her hair was across her pillow and her eyes were dark with lust. She reached up to my face and pulled me back to her and I reached down and hitched one of her legs over mine. I rolled again and Bella was straddled over me. We never broke our heated kiss. I slipped my fingers under her tank top. She leaned back and pulled the tank top from her body. She was wearing a royal blue lacy bra. It contrasted with her pale skin beautifully. I ran my hands up and down her back and she shivered. I then sat up and kissed her passionately. I reached my hands to both of her breasts. I kissed down her neck and collarbones. I looked up at her and asked permission with my eyes. She nodded with a small smile and I leaned in to kiss the soft skin of breasts. I reached behind her and unclasped the bra. Her breasts sprang free. She instinctively went to cover herself. I gently pulled her arms away.

"Don't cover yourself in front me. You are beautiful. The most beautiful creature I have ever laid eyes on," I said fervently. I leaned in and lightly suckled on Bella's right breast. I gently palmed her left one. She threw her head back and moaned. Loudly. I gently nibbled, kissed and sucked on her beautiful breasts. She brought my face back up to hers and kissed me deeply. She pushed me back on her pillows and scooted back on the bed. She kissed across my chest, licking my own nipples. She nibbled down my torso. She licked around my navel and happy trail. She pulled back when she reached the top of my hips. She looked up at me with a quirked eyebrow.

## La Cantante

"A tattoo, Edward?" she asked. She saw the top of my piano tattoo that had done on my hip. "That's hot." She licked and nibbled along my tattoo and made me even harder.

*Seriously going to have the biggest case of blue balls.*

She then kissed back up my body and bit down on my left nipple. I hissed in surprise. She continued her kissing expedition and ended with my mouth. She lay down to the right of me on her side. The feeling of our bare chests touching was wonderful. "I love you, Edward. Thank you for everything,"

"I love you more, Isabella. You are my everything."

She reached over me and pulled on her tank top.

*Damn it! At least she didn't put on her bra.*

She also handed me my shirt. I put it on the edge of the bed. She crawled under the covers and I did the same. She curled against my bare chest and idly traced patterns. Her eyelids drooped and her breath evened out. I turned off the television and watched my love sleep. She snuggled deeper in my embrace. I kissed her lightly on her forehead. I felt my own eyes become heavy and I fell asleep. I slept in my love's arms and I couldn't be happier.

**Okay, so that was a PG -13 brand of citrus. I don't want them hopping into bed right away. I want them to have their love grow before giving themselves to each other. Trust me there will be lemons. I hope I did this one justice.**

**Thank you for all of the comments!**

**Cheers!**

# Attack of the Killer Pixie

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 16: Attack of the Killer Pixie

### BPOV

So comfortable. A bit warm, but so comfy.

I poked my eyes open and was shocked by a pair of ice blue ones gazing back at me. They had a huge grin on their face. They were bouncing. I raised my head in confusion. I blinked a few times and my eyes came into focus.

*Alice.*

"Morning, Alice," I mumbled.

"Ohmigod, Bella! You do realize that you are not alone," she said with a grin.

I turned my body and saw Edward's sleeping face. His hair was flopped down on his forehead. He had his arms wrapped my waist and he held me close to his body. He was shirtless and I took the opportunity to gaze at his form. His chest was muscled. He had a six pack and his shoulders were broad and strong. I grinned at the sight before. Then I realized we're not alone. I shot out of bed like a bullet. Edward was a bit thrown. He looked befuddled and confused. He opened his eyes part way and gazed at me with a sleepy grin. He then looked at his sister and sat up very quickly. He realized his state of undress and blushed. He ran his hand over his face and shook his head.

"What did you two do last night?" Alice sang.

## La Cantante

I looked at my tiny roommate with my jaw hanging open. "Nothing, Alice. Absolutely nothing," I clarified. I looked down at my body and realized that I was in my clothes from last evening. Jeans and a tank top. I reached over to the edge of the bed and handed Edward his shirt. He took it greedily and slipped it over his shoulders.

"Well, I'm going to go work out for a little bit. I'll see you two later. Bye, big brother. Bye, Bella," Alice squealed as she danced out of the room.

I watched as Alice left and shook my head. I felt Edward grab my hand and he dragged me back into my bed. He pulled me to his still bare chest, with his shirt unbuttoned and mumbled that it was too early. He pulled the covers over our heads and held me close.

"I'm supposed to be the one with morning issues, silly," I giggled.

"I have no issues with the morning. I have issues waking up to my sister in my face," he grumbled.

"You did fall asleep in our room, Edward," I said.

"Minor technicalities. She is crazy in the morning. No one in their right mind should be that chipper in the morning. It's nauseating," he whined. "Waking up with you however is not. I love having you in my arms. If dealing with my evil, spite of a sister is the consequence. I'd do it again in a heartbeat."

He ran his hand through my hair and gave me a chaste kiss on my forehead. There is no way he's kissing me on the mouth now. I have some serious morning breath and that shit is nasty. I extricated myself from his grasp, not wanting to leave the Edward/Bella burrito but I needed to address the nastiness I had going on in my mouth.

"Where are you going, beautiful?" he asked with a pout.

"To fix this," I replied pointing to my head, "And to brush my teeth. I have an extra toothbrush. I'll leave it next to the sink when I'm done."

## La Cantante

Edward scrunched his nose and realized what I was talking about. He nodded and I scampered to the bathroom. I ran a brush through my hair and took out my contacts. I put on my glasses. I brushed my teeth and found an extra brush for Edward. I walked out of the bathroom feeling less gross and gave him a shy smile. His face nearly split into two when he smiled. He had put on his shirt, but left it untucked. He looked a bit rumpled but still was devastatingly handsome. He walked up to me and gave me a warm embrace. I melted into his arms.

"I enjoyed spending time with you, Bella I'm going to quickly brush my own teeth. Don't move, beautiful," he said as he dashed into the bathroom. I chuckled and made my bed. After I did that, I put on my hoodie from yesterday and sat down on my bed. I was flipping through a magazine that Rose left on her desk when Edward came out of the bathroom. He ambled back to my bed and lay down facing me. I ran my fingers through his soft hair and combed it out of his eyes. "I love you, Bella."

"I love you too, Edward," I replied quietly. "Thank you again for last night. This has been the best birthday I've ever had. You've made it truly special."

"I hope to make every birthday special, Bella," he said reverently. "So, what do you want to do today?"

"I have to write a paper for psychology, do some reading for U.S. History, and some workbook pages for Italian. I probably should do those things before I can play with you, baby."

He jutted out his bottom lip in an adorable pout. "So responsible. Well, I am going to run up to my room and shower. Do you mind if I bring down my books and study down here with you? We can divide up the U.S. History reading and get through it faster."

"That sounds good. How about we both shower, get breakfast and then get our study on."

## La Cantante

"How about we shower together and conserve water," Edward suggested as he waggled his brows.

"Tempting, Cullen. Very tempting, but no. You shower in your room and I shower here," I giggled. He pouted again.

"Spoilsport."

"I'm not a spoilsport. You just want to see me naked!" I laughed as I swatted his arm.

"And that's a bad thing because..." he replied as he gestured with his hand.

"Perv!"

"Admit it. You're curious as to what's below the belt," Edward challenged.

"I am but I don't want to use the dorm showers as a place for our little experiment. That's just gross!" I squealed. "I am curious to see your tattoo. I would never have pegged you as a tattoo type of guy."

"I got it over spring break last year. It hurt like a son of a bitch, but I like it. I also liked what you did to it," Edward said suggestively. He leaned into my ear, "I'm getting hard just thinking about it."

"I'm getting wet thinking about it, too," I said. As soon as the words left my mouth, I blushed furiously.

*Filter? Hello? Where are you?*

"Ugh, Bella. You can't say stuff like that and not expect me to jump you," Edward groaned.

"What's stopping you?"

*Brain! What the fuck?*



## La Cantante

"I'm going to go before I start ripping off your clothes and have my wicked way with you. I'm pretty certain my sister would NOT enjoy that show. I'd personally love it, but do I want Alice seeing that? Hell, to the no!"

Edward gracefully hopped off of the bed and grabbed his jacket and vest from my desk chair. I scooted off of the bed and tried not be upset with his words. He turned and looked at me. He ran his fingers across my cheeks.

"Bella, I'm sorry if I hurt your feelings. When...no. If we have sex, I want it to be special for you. I don't want it to be 'having sex' or 'fucking.' I want to make love to you. I want to cherish every inch of your body. However, I want you to know, you will be the last woman I ever make love to," Edward said gently.

I raised my eyebrows at his admission. *Does he want to marry me? Seriously? We've been together for a minute and he's ready to talk marriage.*

"I love you so much, baby," he finished as he kissed me on my jaw and languidly moved closer to my lips. When he reached my lips, he angled my head so he could deepen the kiss. All too soon, he pulled away with crooked grin. "See you in a half hour or so, beautiful."

"I love you, Edward. See you in a little bit."

xx LC xx

Edward, Alice, Jasper, Emmett and I headed to the cafeteria after our showers. We got our breakfasts and hung out. Right before we headed back to our rooms, Alice started bouncing in her seat. Edward put his arm around her shoulders to try and restrain her. It wasn't happening.

"Alice! Why are you doing an impression of a Mexican jumping bean, sugar?" Jasper drawled.

Alice looked at Edward with a hopeful smile. They were definitely up to something. Edward rolled his eyes and nodded at Alice. She clapped and squealed.

## La Cantante

"We're going out for Bella's birthday tonight! I made reservations for eight people at La Bella Italia. After we are going to this club in downtown and dancing our little hearts out," she screeched.

I was floored. I was wholly unprepared for this revelation. I gaped at Edward. He gave me a contrite grin and leaned in to whisper in my ear, "I was only expecting dinner with all of us. Not the dancing."

"You knew?" I squeaked.

He nodded with a tentative smile. He then turned to his sister, "Alice, you do know that we are only six people?"

"Five," I corrected.

"No, six, baby. Rose said she'd be back in time for your dinner. I talked to her yesterday while you were being attacked by a killer pixie," Edward explained.

"You're BOTH wrong. I ran into Angela, our RA, and she is coming with her boyfriend, Ben. Ben Cheney, I think his name is," Alice said.

I was shocked. I was floored. I was....I don't even know what emotion it was. "Alice!" I admonished.

She looked at me sweetly and came to sit on my lap. I was ready to throw her spritely ass out the window. She gently ran her hands down my face. "Bella," she nearly whispered, "You only turn 19 once. I want to make it special."

"But...you...how...shit...Edward...ARGH!" I sputtered.

"Is she speaking English, Edward?" Emmett asked in a stage whisper. Edward chuckled and shook his head no.

"If my translation is correct, I'm the shit?" Edward responded. I looked over Alice and glared at my boyfriend. "Or not."

## La Cantante

I shook my head and pulled off my glasses. I rubbed my eyes. I couldn't believe this was happening. I felt a pair of hands pull my fingers away from my eyes. I opened my eyes and looked at my evil midget roommate. She raised a perfectly arched brow. "You. Will. Have. Fun. End of discussion. Reservations are at 8. We need to get ready beginning at 6:00."

"Christ, Alice! Two hours to get ready? You're not going to attack me with the curling iron again are you?" I whined.

"Nope."

"Oh, thank God," I said as I relaxed into the chair.

"The straightening iron," she said with a wicked grin.

I pushed her off of me and put my head in my arms. "Fuck."

The whole table erupted into laughter. I felt Edward rub his hand on my back as he laughed. I sat back up and put my glasses on and grabbed my tray. I stood up and stomped back to deposit my tray to get cleaned. I needed to get out of there. I was almost out of the cafeteria when I heard Edward call my name.

"Bella! Baby! I'm sorry. If you don't want to go out, we don't have to. Please don't be mad at them. Blame Alice," he panted.

"You're partly to blame, too," I snapped. I realized I was being too harsh.

"Sorry. I don't mean to come off as sounding like a bitch. I just abhor, loathe, and HATE surprises. Especially when they involve me."

"You're not being a bitch. You were thrown for a loop. I apologize. I do mean it that we don't have to go out. We can stay back and watch *Shawshank Redemption*."

"Edward, I'll go out. However, file it under future reference that I hate surprises," I said.

## La Cantante

"Got it and it's filed. Let's head back to Patterson. If my watch is right, you only five hours before Alice attacks you with a straightening iron. What the hell is that?"

"Your guess is as good as mine, Edward. I haven't a fucking clue," I replied with a sardonic grin.

"It sounds like an implement of torture," he said as he scrunched his nose.

"If Alice is wielding it, it probably is. Thank you though for going through all the trouble to make my birthday special. I know that Alice didn't do this all on her own. A certain green-eyed hottie probably put the idea in her head."

"I merely steered her in the right direction. She did the rest on her own," he replied as he laced his fingers with mine. "You think I'm hot?"

"Fishing for compliments, Cullen?" I teased.

"No! Definitely not!" he said. He rolled his eyes, "Okay, maybe."

"Let me be brutally honest, Edward," I said as I pulled him to a stop. "You are the most gorgeous man I'd ever set eyes on. You have insane sex hair, piercing green eyes, and a great body. However, that is not what attracts me to you, or love you. It's your heart and your mind. You are the kindest man I've known. You are loving and generous. You're also incredibly intelligent and talented. The looks are a bonus. It's the whole package that makes you hot."

Edward stared at me. His eyes shone with tears. His cheeks became pink and he brought his hand to my cheek. "That has to be the most wonderful thing anyone has said to me. You never cease to amaze me, Bella. What did I do to deserve you?"

It was now my turn to blush. I ducked my head and shrugged. "I meant every word, Edward. You are incredibly special. I'm blessed to have you in my life."

## La Cantante

"I'm the blessed one, Isabella." He leaned in gave me a reverent kiss. In this kiss, I felt all of the emotions that I tried to convey in my heartfelt confession. I could feel the love and passion that he poured into this kiss. He pulled me into a tight embrace and nuzzled my hair. "My beautiful Bella."

He pulled away and we continued our trek back to Patterson. We headed up to my room. We hunkered down for a few hours of studying. However, there was a dramatic shift in our relationship. This was truly deeper than either one of his had ever experienced. I thought I would be scared, but I wasn't. I was excited. The smile on Edward's handsome face indicated that he was excited as well.

xx LC xx

"Okay, Edward. You need to leave," Alice said with tone that could not be argued with. Rose giggled from her bed. She had come back about an hour ago.

"Jeez, Alice. Rude much?" Edward teased.

"We need to get ready for our night out on the town. As much as you love Bella, she's going to get sick of your skinny ass if you're ALWAYS here."

"I love your ass, Edward. Nice and firm. You can stay as long as you want," I retorted.

"Thank you, baby. It's the thigh master. Works wonders for the ass. I love your ass too, Bella. I think I'll stay for a bit longer," he said as he laid his head in my lap.

"Funny. Hysterical. You two should go on the road," Alice snipped.

"What do you think, baby? Should we become standup comics?" Edward asked.

"Why not?"

"Edward!" Alice whined.

## La Cantante

"Alice!" Edward mimicked. He lifted his head and looked at her. She was begging and pleading with the looks that she was giving him. "Oh, fine. Meddlesome, evil sprite."

Alice stuck out her tongue at her brother as he gathered his books. He ruffled her hair and stuck out his tongue at her. "Bye, baby. Love you."

*Please don't leave me with the evil pixie!*

"Bye, Edward," I said in a pathetic tone. "Love you too. Don't go."

"Oh gag me! Bella shower, now. Edward go. We'll see you later," Alice commanded. She stomped over to my bed and dragged me out of it. She pointed at the door and Edward skulked out. She handed me some clothes and a towel and shoved me into the bathroom. When I got into the shower, I looked at the pile of clothes that she handed me. It was a teal blue bra and panty set. No, panties would be too much for this. It was barely a thong. I walked back to the bedroom.

"Alice! Seriously?" I fumed.

"You don't want a VPL," she stated simply.

"What the fuck is VPL?" I asked.

"Do you not read Cosmo? Visible Panty Line. Duh," she replied with a roll of the eyes. She shoved me back into the bathroom. Once I was in and the door was closed, I flipped her the bird.

"I saw that, Swan!"

*Damn evil sprite.*

I took a quick shower and put on the scandalous underwear that Alice handed me. I grabbed my robe from the hook in the bathroom and walked back into the bedroom. Rose got up and strode into the bathroom. I pulled a brush through

## La Cantante

my wet hair. I walked to my bed and saw an outfit on it. There was a black pencil skirt, a teal blue blouse with ruffles. I gawked at Alice. She just smiled sweetly as she motioned me over to her desk chair. I rolled my eyes and walked over to her. She pushed me down and began drying my hair. As she worked, I fiddled with the charms on my bracelet. I was truly amazed at Edward's thoughtful gift. For only knowing each other for a few days, he knocked this present out of the park. Alice finished drying my hair. She lightly grabbed my wrist and looked at the bracelet.

"This is beautiful, Bella. Did you get it for your birthday?" Alice asked.

"Yeah. Edward got it for me," I replied.

"Shut the front door! Seriously?"

"You sound surprised, Ali."

"I am. I never thought my brother could get such a thoughtful, meaningful gift. My parents and I are lucky to get a card for our birthdays," she said with a tight grin.

"I doubt that. He seems so attentive."

"Okay, maybe I'm exaggerating. However, this is beautiful and I am surprised that Edward got it for you. I really must love you."

"He does. And I love him."

"Good, I'm glad." Alice pulled out this weird contraption and attacked my head with it. She took sections of my hair and she pulled. She pulled forever it seemed. When she was finished, she took some small bottle and squirted some stuff into her hands and ran her fingers through my hair. "Your hair is done. Get dressed while I hop in the shower. Wear the same shoes you wore last night."

## La Cantante

Rose was curling her hair when I began getting dressed. I pulled on the skirt under my robe. I then took off my robe and put on the blouse. I figured I would do my makeup. I put some eye shadow on to give my eyes a smoky feel. I also put on some pink blush, a layer of lip gloss and some mascara. I grabbed a silver necklace and put it on along with a pair of dangly silver earrings.

"So, Bella. How was your date last night?" Rosalie asked.

"It was fabulous. We went to an Italian restaurant called Baci's. We went there on our first date. Kind of. Edward got a private dining room. I had seafood marinara and he had lasagna. It was really good. Edward gave me this gorgeous bracelet for my birthday and he said that he loved me."

"I could tell that you two are very much in love. He's over the moon for you, Bella. I also knew that he got you the bracelet. He showed me while Alice was finishing up with you last night. It's perfect. However, what happened after dinner?"

"We came back here. I changed. I needed to get out of the dress and heels. I hate heels. I asked him to pick out a movie. We got about halfway through the movie before we started making out. Things got pretty hot. We ended up falling asleep together and Alice woke us up this morning."

Rose gave me a knowing smile. She went to put on her clothes and make up. Alice lithely danced back into the room and went to her closet. She pulled out some clothes and placed them on her bed. Alice got ready and Rose did the same.

I grabbed my cell phone and went out into the hallway. I decided to give my father a call.

"Hello?"

"Hey Charlie! How are you doing?" I asked.



## La Cantante

"I'm good, baby girl. Happy Birthday. I was on a job and couldn't use my phone," Charlie explained.

"Thanks, Dad." I replied quietly.

"Did you get my package? I sent you some presents. I'm also certain that Renee did the same."

"Uh, no. I haven't gotten my mail in a few days. I'll swing by the mailroom on Monday. I just wanted to say hi and that I miss you, Dad."

"I miss you too. How are things going with Edmund?"

"It's Edward, Dad. He's fine. He took me out for my birthday yesterday. We went to this Italian restaurant and we were in a private dining room. It was so romantic, Dad."

"I'm glad that Edward is taking care of you. He seems like a fine young man. I do have some news for you regarding Jacob. We got you a restraining order. A copy is in your package that I sent you. It's only valid in Washington State, but I wanted you to have a copy. When you come home, he can't come within 500 feet of you."

"That's a relief. Thank you for doing that for me, Dad."

"Not a problem, Bells. Are you going out tonight? You can't spend the entire weekend in your dorm room," he teased.

"I'm going out to dinner with, Edward, Emmett and their roommate Jasper, my roommates, Angela and her boyfriend, Ben. After dinner, we're going to a club in town."

"You dancing? Oh good lord. Have fun with that, Bella," he laughed.

"Thanks. I got to go. We have reservations at 8 and probably getting ready to go. I love you, Dad," I said softly.

## La Cantante

"Love you too, baby girl. Have fun and stay safe."

I hung up my phone and went back into my dorm room. Alice and Rosalie were both almost ready. Rose was wearing a pair of black dress pants that made her legs look a million miles long. She also wore a pair of black boots. On top, she was wearing a red blouse with a black leather jacket. Her hair was curled and pulled off of her face. Alice was wearing a skirt, like me. She had on a bright purple shirt and a silver belt around her waist. She had some funky jewelry on and a pair of black ankle booties with insanely high heels.

"Wow! You look great! Both of you," I said.

"Thanks, Bella. You look beautiful as well," Rose replied.

"Outfit fabulous. Hair great. Make up not so much. Come here and let me touch you up," Alice demanded.

I grumbled. "You know you are very pushy, don't you Alice?"

"Yes, but my brother will definitely like it. Sit," she said as she pointed to her desk chair. I sat down with a grunt and Alice went to work on my face. As Alice was working on me, there was a knock on the door. I grabbed a mirror and saw the improvements that she made.

*I look exactly the same. Good Lord!*

Rose answered the door and ushered the guys in. Angela and her boyfriend Ben were close behind. The guys were dressed in black. They all were wearing ties, but that was the only difference in their outfits. Angela was wearing a black dress with a pair of heels and purple accessories. Her hair was straight and her glasses were gone. I looked at my group of friends and smiled. I was truly happy to have such good friends and to find them so quickly.

*You are one lucky bitch. Enjoy it, Swan!*

## La Cantante

Edward walked up to me and gave me a heated kiss before he slipped behind me and wrapped his arms around my waist. He looked amazing. His pale skin contrasted with the black of clothes. He was wearing a pair of black jeans, a black button up with a black white tie. I wriggled free from his grasp and went to my closet. I dug around in it and pulled out his black leather jacket that he lent me last week. It had no longer had his clean smell. I wanted him to wear it tonight. I handed his jacket to him and he gave me a smirk.

"Am I getting this back permanently?" he teased.

"Nope. Only temporarily," I countered. He shook his head and pulled it around his shoulders.

"Okay, so here's the plan, kids. We're taking two cars. Edward, Bella, Angela and Ben in Edward's soccer mobile," Alice began.

"Alice! It's not a soccer mobile," Edward whined.

"Whatever, Edward. The soccer moms around our town all drive that exact same car. It's a damn soccer mobile."

"Evil little sprite," he mumbled. I elbowed him and gave him a kiss.

"As I was saying before the soccer mom got his thong in a twist, was two cars. Jasper, Rosalie, Emmett and me in my Audi," Alice explained.

"Actually, Alice, Ben and I are going in his car. I have to be back for rounds at one. The club is open to at least three. We need to head back before you," Angela said. "Someone was willing to split their rounds with me so I could go."

"Okay, we'll take three cars," Alice relented.

"I'll go with Edward and Bella, if you don't mind, Alice," Rose said.

## La Cantante

"Whatever you want to do, Rosalie. We gotta book it. We're already behind schedule. I don't want to be late," Alice said as she clapped her hands. "Let's boogie!"

We all poured out of our dorm room and headed to the parking lot. Edward, being the consummate gentleman that he is, offered his elbow to Rosalie. She gave a shy smile and took it. He also offered me his other elbow and we walked out to his car. We piled into the soccer mobile and pulled out into the darkness.

"How far is the restaurant from here?" Rosalie asked from the backseat.

"It's about forty-five minutes away. We'll have to hop on the highway to get there. It's close to where Alice and I grew up. We actually go there a lot."

"I sincerely hope that you are a better driver than Alice. I aged thirty years the one time I was in the car with her. Sheesh!" Rose said with an eye roll.

"She is horrible on the road. She also has the worst case road rage I've ever seen. She can make a sailor blush with all of the curse words that fly out of her mouth. I like to drive fast but I have a spotless record. I can almost sense when there's a speed trap or safety control," Edward replied.

"How come you didn't drive, Rose?" I asked.

"I didn't want to cross the mad pixie. Besides, my car is in the shop back home. My little beemer is sick and needed some love and attention. I wanted to work on it but I had my dad drive me back here. We dropped it at the next best thing and it will be fixed and my parents will return it next weekend."

I nodded in understanding. Edward smoothly got onto the highway and we sped along to La Bella Italia. We spent the ride in a comfortable silence. Edward had his iPod set up in the sound system and listened to that. A little less than hour, we arrived at the restaurant and went inside.

## La Cantante

We were ushered to a small dining room and handed our menus. The waitress came and took our drink orders. Emmett and Ben both ordered a beer and the rest of us got pop or water. Alice made the decision that we were going to have this meal family style. She ordered a variety of foods and we all shared from the massive servings that were brought out. After we ate our fill of dinner, the wait staff came out with a birthday cake with nineteen candles on it. Edward, Alice, Rose and Jasper all looked at each other and began singing happy birthday. In four part harmony. Ben also joined in to add a fifth part. I guffawed at them before I blew out my candles. The waitress took the cake away and cut it up for us. We all enjoyed a delicious piece of cake.

Before we left, Alice started bouncing. Jasper held her down and mumbled, "Mexican jumping bean."

"You have to open your presents before we go, Bella!"

"Presents! Oh, Christ!" I retorted.

Alice dashed behind a curtain in the room and pulled out several gift bags. She placed them in front of me. I opened up the first bag and it was from Jasper and Emmett. I pulled out a black t-shirt. I turned it around and it was Breaking Midnight shirt with rhinestones.

"You're part of the band, now. You got to have a shirt," Jasper drawled.

"Thanks, guys," I said sincerely as I put it back into the bag. I turned to the next bag. It was from Alice, Rosalie and Angela. I peered inside and pulled out an envelope. It was a gift certificate for a day at the spa: massages, pedicures, manicures, the whole works. Also in the envelope was a coupon for a "girl's day."

"Wow! This is awesome. I've never been to a spa before," I mused.

"You'll love it. You have to use the coupon the same day you go to the spa because we're going with you," Alice responded.

## La Cantante

There was one more bag on the table. I reached inside and pulled out a small box. I opened up the box and there was a gift card to my favorite bookstore. I was confused though.

"It's from our parents," Edward explained. It was like he read my mind and answered my question.

"Oh. Tell them thank you," I said quietly.

"You can tell them next Friday. After your time with Garrett, my parents were insistent that they meet you," Edward said with crooked grin.

As I was opening up my presents, Alice had settled the bill and we headed out to the club. It was a short walk from the restaurant. We got to the club, *Eclipse*, and there was a line. Alice confidently walked up to the bouncer, whispered in his ear and he gave her a smile. He stepped aside and ushered us in. As I passed, he said "Happy Birthday."

*Spoiled, meddlesome pixie. But I love her!*

We walked into the dark club and were overwhelmed with pulsated sounds and flashing lights. We walked further into the club and headed to the back. Alice strode into the VIP section of the club and we followed suit. Emmett and Ben went to the bar and got some drinks. Angela and Rosalie sat down and were talking on a couch. Jasper pulled Alice into his lap and began cuddling with her. Edward and I sat down on a small loveseat. He wrapped his arm around my body and pulled me close.

"Have I told you that looked beautiful tonight, Isabella?" he purred.

I shook my head as I drew my bottom lip into my teeth. I looked at him and his normally bright green eyes were darkened with excitement. He moved his hand down my arm and lightly squeezed my hip. He leaned closer to my ear and sucked right below it. "I really wish that I could have you all to myself, right now. You are absolutely gorgeous. I love you, Bella," he crooned.

## La Cantante

*I'm melting! Melting! Watch out for the puddle of Bella goo on the floor.*

I whimpered at his words and gnawed on my lip. He pulled my lip from my teeth. "I want to bite that lip, baby." He leaned in and kissed me. He brought my bottom lip between his own teeth and began nibbling. My hands instinctually went to his hair and I responded to the kiss with fervor. I could feel his grip get tighter around my body. I thrust my tongue between his soft lips and he gave a soft groan. I dropped one of my hands and brought down to his thigh. I lightly rubbed his leg, inching closer to his growing erection. He removed from my hair and stopped my exploration. He pulled away and his eyes were fiery.

"You are a dangerous creature, Isabella," he growled.

"When," I replied.

"What?" he asked.

"Last night you said if we have sex, we're going to make love. I'm letting you know that it will not be 'if,' it'll be when. It's not happening tonight, but it will," I said fervently.

"Oh my God, Bella. I love you so much," Edward replied as kissed me deeply.

"I love you, too. I can't wait until 'when,'" I responded as I leaned my head on his chest.

"Me neither, baby."

Our little love bubble was burst when Alice grabbed my hand and dragged me to the dance floor. Rosalie and Angela were right behind us. We got out to the middle of the dance floor and moved our bodies. We danced with each other in a tight little circle. We shook our hips and threw our arms above our heads. It was great fun.

## La Cantante

As we were dancing, I felt a body behind me. I shot a look over my shoulder and a big, beefy guy with dark hair was trying to grind with me. I tried to inch away from the big guy and get closer to my girls. He was having nothing of it. He wrapped his beefy arms around me and he thrust his package in my ass. I frantically looked for Emmett, Jasper, Edward or Ben. I caught my eyes with Ben and shot him a look of pure fear. He caught on and tugged on Edward's sleeve. I struggled against the huge man. He just held me tighter. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw all four guys rush onto the dance floor. Emmett got to my "friend" first and forcefully tapped him on the shoulder.

"Back off, buddy. She's having a good time. Aren't you sweetheart?" Beefcake asked as he tried to nuzzle my hair. I shoved his face away, unsuccessfully.

"Oh no, buddy. She's not having a good time. Can't you see she's trying to push you away?" Jasper snarled.

"What are you going to do about it, slim? It's not like you can kick my ass or anything. Come on baby. Let's go back to my place. I can show you a good time."

"No. Leave me alone, you ass," I screeched. I saw Edward and he had a look of terror and anger.

"Let. Her. Go," Edward seethed. "There are four of us and one of you."

Beefcake let me go and got into Edward's face. He was a good half a foot taller than Edward and easily had a hundred pounds on him. Emmett took this opportunity and grabbed Beefcake into a wrestling hold. He quickly fell to his knees. Emmett looked at Edward and gave a nod toward Beefcake. Edward curled his right fist and coiled his arm back to punch Beefcake. He connected with his nose and it immediately started bleeding. I could smell the blood and I began to get lightheaded. Jasper saw me sway on my feet and put his arms around my waist.

"Edward!" he cried.



## La Cantante

Edward's head snapped up and saw me get woozy. I vaguely remember Edward sneering at Beefcake before he picked me up, bridal style and carried me back to the VIP section of the club. He sat us down on one of the couches and grabbed a bottle of water.

"Here, drink this, baby," Edward said with anxiety lacing his tone. I weakly took the bottle of water and downed half of the bottle. My head was still pounding and I still felt dizzy. I leaned over my knees and tried taking deep breaths. Edward rubbed my back and shoulders. The others came back to the VIP section and I could barely hear Edward talking to them. I was still trying to calm my racing heart, my dizzy head and wrap my mind about what happened.

I sat back up and saw the worried faces of my friends. I gave them a weak smile. Edward handed me my water bottle and I took a sip.

"Are you okay, Bella?" Ben asked.

"Yeah, I will be. I don't react well to blood or violence. Give me a minute or twenty," I joked.

"We got that asshole kicked out of the club. Edward broke his nose, we think," Emmett said proudly. He grinned at Edward and offered his fist. Edward gave him a fist bump with his left hand. The rest of the group scattered to other various parts of the VIP section.

I turned and looked at Edward. He was still incredibly panicked. I reached up and caressed his cheek. He closed his eyes and leaned into my touch. I noticed that he was cradling his right hand. My gaze hardened and I reached for his right hand. He tentatively handed it to me. His knuckles were all bruised and I was afraid that he broken something.

"Edward," I sighed. "Emmett, can you get some ice from the bar?" Emmett rushed off to get the ice.

"I'm fine, baby," Edward said as he open and closed his fist. He hissed in pain.

## La Cantante

"Fine, my ass. It may be broken," I admonished. Emmett returned with the ice in a plastic bag and he handed it to me. I gingerly placed it on Edward's knuckles. He winced at the temperature. I gently brushed the hair out of Edward's face and laced my fingers with his other hand. "Thank you for helping me, baby."

"I'd die for you, Bella. When I saw what that fucker was doing to you, I was ready to kill," he whispered.

"I'll let you in a little secret. I'm a danger magnet. If something bad is going to happen, more often than not, it'll happen to me," I teased

"Then you're stuck with me for the rest of your life," he said gently. "I was so scared, baby. I didn't want you to get hurt."

"I think I found someone who rivals Emmett in the protectiveness department," I said with a smile.

"You've definitely proved yourself tonight, Cullen. You are worthy to date my sister. You did good, bro. I never knew a music geek like you had such a strong right hook."

"You want to go, Edward?" I asked.

"Yeah. However, can you reach in my right pocket? You're going to have to drive," he said with a painful wince.

"I get to drive the soccer mobile?"

"It's not a soccer mobile, Bella. Don't start," he said with a pointed glare.

"I didn't start. I'm just continuing. Blame Alice," I joked.

"Funny, Swan. Text my sister and let her know that we're leaving. Rosalie will have to get a ride from Alice or Ben. Use my phone."

## La Cantante

"Why? Do you want me just to put my hands in your pockets and feel up your ass and your junk?"

"That would be nice. Much better than dealing with a throbbing hand. It doesn't matter what phone you use, just let her know that we're leaving," Edward said with a grimace.

I pulled out my phone and sent a text to Alice and Rose.

*Edward's hand is jacked up. We're heading back to Emerson. Call if you need anything. Thank you for a fun time tonight. Love you both - B*

Edward put on his jacket and he nodded down to his pocket. I reached in and pulled out his car keys. I grabbed my presents and purse and we headed back to his Volvo. I opened the door for him and he settled into the passenger seat. I slid into the driver's seat and adjusted the mirrors and seat. After I got them to where I liked them, I backed out of the parking spot. We headed off to Emerson. Edward reached across the console and grabbed my right hand and laced my fingers in his with left. We held hands until we got to Patterson where I parked and we headed up to my room.

"I'm going to go change, baby. I'm staying with you tonight. I need to hold you," he said gently.

I nodded and I went into my room. I quickly changed into a pair of sleep pants and a tank top. I went into the bathroom and I scrubbed my face and pulled my hair into a low ponytail. I finished my nightly routine by brushing my teeth. I walked out into the dorm room and saw Edward on my bed. He was wearing a pair of flannel pants and an Emerson t-shirt. He was still cradling his right hand. He held open his arms and I snuggled against him. I pressed a kiss against his chest.

"Sleep, baby. If your hand is still bothering you tomorrow, I'm dragging you to the hospital. Got it, Cullen?" I smirked

## La Cantante

"Yes, ma'am," he said sleepily with a mock salute. I got up and got him an icepack from our freezer and put it on his hand. He grumbled and I pushed him back onto my bed.

"Thank you again for taking care of me, Edward."

He idly traced circles on my back as he held me. "I'd do anything for you, Bella. I love you. I'm so in love with you. You don't need to thank me. However, thank you for taking care of me."

"I'd do anything for you, Edward. I love you so much," I said fervently. "We need to sleep, though. I'm tired, you're tired and injured. Let me warn Alice and Rose, first."

I scrambled out of bed and grabbed my phone. I tapped out a quick message to inform them that we had a guest in our room. Alice and Rose replied immediately saying that they expected it. I crawled back into bed and snuggled up to Edward. He pressed a kiss to my forehead and held me tightly.

"I love you, my Bella," he said sleepily.

"I love you too, Edward." Despite the drama at the club, this was one of the best birthdays. I nuzzled Edward's chest and he hummed in contentment. I closed my eyes and drifted to sleep, incredibly happy to be in my love's arms.

**Things should pick up after this chapter. I have the story planned out and I just need to get my booty in gear. Thank you for all of the comments and faves.**

# Observation Hours

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 17: Observation Hours

### EPOV

I had never been so scared in all of my life. That huge, smelly fucker had his paws all over my Bella. I was surprised that I had the restraint to just punch him in the nose. I was ready and willing to do more. Jasper saved me from getting arrested when he called out and I saw Bella sway. I sneered in the asshole's face, "You got lucky, fucker. We see you again and you're through."

I grabbed Bella and scooped her in my arms. She felt so small and fragile. She was very lightheaded and I got her some water. I insisted that she drink it. Bella put her head between her knees. I gently massaged her shoulders with my left hand. My right hand hurt like a motherfucker. I was hoping that it wasn't broken.

The rest of the group came up to the VIP section and their faces were all etched with worry. The girls appeared to look more guilty than worried. They were on the dance floor with Bella when fuckface started grinding up against her. Ben asked if Bella was okay. She said that she would be. I glared at all of them and they sheepishly went to other places in the club. Emmett stayed behind. He was clearly rattled by the whole experience. Emmett did, however, seemed to be more comfortable with me and Bella. He finally realized that I was ready to die for his sister. We shared a typical guy "fist bump," and Bella noticed that I was cradling my right hand.

She tenderly inspected my injured hand. She asked Emmett to get some ice. I

## La Cantante

tried to be all macho and say it was fine and flex my fingers. It hurt. It hurt a lot. I swore I felt some bones rubbing each other. Not good. Emmett returned with my ice and Bella placed it gingerly on my swollen knuckles. I hissed at the cold. After the initial shock of cold, it felt good. Bella tried to make light of the situation. Her joking made me feel slightly better. I was still so mad at the asshole who tried to hurt my Bella. She seemed to realize that and asked if I wanted to go. I said yes and asked her to drive. If I had driven, I would have taken her to my parents' house, packed a bag and fell off the face of the earth with her. She razzed me about driving my car, the "Soccer Mobile," and I made a mental note to kick Alice's ass. Bella sent a quick text to Alice to inform her that we were leaving and we went out to my car. I held her hand the entire drive back to Emerson. I wanted to touch her to make sure that she was alright.

We drove back to Patterson and went up to her room. I told her that I wanted to change and that I was sleeping with her again. She said she understood. I raced up to my room and quickly changed into a pair of flannel sleep pants and an Emerson t-shirt. I'm pretty certain that Rose would not be as comfortable with me being there, but I needed to be there for Bella. I needed to be with her for me. I quickly brushed my teeth, clumsily with my left hand. I gazed down to my right hand and grimaced at the damage that asshole's face had done. I tentatively flexed and fisted my hand. It hurt. I rummaged through the medicine cabinet and grabbed some ibuprofen. I popped a few pills and slipped on a pair shoes and went back to Bella's dorm room. She was still puttering in her own bathroom. I toed off my shoes and lay down on Bella's bed.

She walked out of the bathroom and her face was marred with worry. I held open my arms and she crossed into them. I took a deep breath as she settled against my chest. She pressed a kiss to my collarbones and told me to go to sleep. She also told me that if my hand was still bothering me in the morning, we were going to the hospital. She scrambled up and sent a quick text. She came back with another icepack and we fell asleep.

xx LC xx

We woke up the next morning to an empty room. Bella rolled over and grumbled into her pillow. I chuckled at her reaction. She was adorable in the

## La Cantante

morning. I pulled her closer to me and she snuggled.

"We got to get up, baby," I cooed.

"Don't wanna. Comfy. Happy. Love you," she mumbled.

"I love you, too."

Bella raised her head and gave me a cute little glare. Her hair was plastered to her face and she had lines on her face from the pillow. She still was beautiful. I gave her a crooked grin. "You're beautiful, Bella."

"You need glasses. I can only imagine what I look like, Edward," she muttered.

"Like you just woke up and you're gorgeous," I said sincerely.

"You just woke up and you look like can be a GQ model. Damn."

"Please, Bella," I said as I rolled my eyes.

Bella squinted her eyes and looked around the room. She looked back at me and then the room. "Where is everybody?" she asked.

I shrugged. Bella stretched her body. As she did, her shirt rode up and I saw a sliver of her flat stomach. I got up and pressed a kiss on her belly. She ruffled my hair as I blew a raspberry onto her smooth abdomen. She rolled out of bed and padded to the bathroom. Something on her desk caught her eye; she walked and picked up a piece of paper. She laughed and handed me the paper before went to the bathroom. I grabbed the paper and sat up on her bed. I quickly read the note. It was from Alice and Rose. They said that they were going out to breakfast with Emmett and Jasper. They also had to run some errands and would be back in the early afternoon. I looked at the clock and was surprised that it was nearly 11. I hopped out of the bed and made it for Bella.

She came back out of the bathroom and she had her glasses on. She smoothed out her hair and looked a bit more awake. She was still in her sleep clothes. I

## La Cantante

crossed to her and placed my arms around her waist from behind. I nuzzled her neck and held her tightly. "Thank you," I murmured against her hair.

"Why are you thanking me?" she asked.

"For being with me, baby. I love you."

"I love you too. Give me your hand," she demanded. I released my right hand from her waist and she looked at my knuckles. I flexed my fingers and they hurt but not nearly as bad as last night. "No hospital, it seems."

"Thank you, Dr. Swan. I concur with your diagnosis," I teased. I kissed her head before dashing into the bathroom to brush my teeth. I used the toothbrush that Bella gave me yesterday and splashed some water on my face. I walked back out into the dorm room and pulled Bella back to her bed. She fell onto the bed and I hovered over her.

"What are you doing, Edward?" she said with a blush.

"I want to make out with my girlfriend. I didn't get to yesterday. Is that a crime?" I asked.

"No," she replied with a seductive grin. "What are you waiting for, Cullen? A personal invitation?"

I leaned down and crashed my lips against hers. Her body arched against mine. I plunged my tongue into her mouth. I could taste the mint of the toothpaste. Our tongues danced with each other. Bella's hips reflexively ground against mine. I placed my hands on her hips and rolled, never breaking our heated embrace. She was straddling my legs, her heat over my erection. She rolled her hips in an erotic manner causing me to groan.

"You like that, Edward?" she purred.

"More than you imagine, beautiful. You are so fucking sexy," I growled. I grabbed her ponytail and gently pulled. She tilted her head, giving me better



## La Cantante

access to her neck. I greedily nibbled along her neck and shoulders. I pulled down the strap of her tank top and licked on her soft skin. She ground her hips against me, providing friction between our bodies. She groaned as she swiveled her hips. Her sounds and moans went straight to my dick. It was getting harder and it strained against my pants.

Bella's hands reached the bottom of my t-shirt and she pulled it off. She pushed me back on the pillows and began kissing my jaw. She licked and sucked down my chest. She bit down on my nipple and I moaned loudly. I reached for Bella's tank top and began to lift it off. My efforts were thwarted when Bella's phone began ringing from her desk. We both stopped our kissing and touching. Bella adjusted her shirt and walked to her desk.

"Hello, Alice."

*Fucking, meddlesome pixie.*

xx LC xx

The rest of the day on Sunday was spent lazing around. After a quick shower and breakfast, I wrote a paper on my laptop in Bella's room. She did some Italian homework and began research for a paper in her education class. The whole group went up to our room and watched a movie on Emmett's television. Jasper and Alice were cuddled on his bed. Rose sat on the floor in my beanbag chair. Emmett spent the entire movie watching Rosalie. Bella and I were on my bed, with her between my legs, leaning against me as I sat against the wall. After the movie, the girls headed down to their room. I really didn't want Bella to leave, but we knew that we couldn't sleep in each other's arms every night.

*At least, not yet. I can still look for an apartment. Hmmmmmm...*

I fell into a fitful sleep Sunday night. I couldn't get comfortable. I just wanted Bella.

I eventually fell asleep. I actually slept through my alarm. I scrambled to get ready on Monday morning. I hastily threw on a pair of jeans, a hoodie and a hat

## La Cantante

because I didn't have time to grab a shower. When I picked up Bella, she gave me shit because my sex hair was all covered up. I promised her that I would be all 'poofed' by the time I saw her in University Singers. I would run back to Patterson in between biochem and choir to grab a shower.

I'm not like the typical college guy. There were guys on my floor my freshman year who would shower once a week. That's just nasty and gross. The stench that came from their rooms and from their bodies was repulsive. I like getting dressed up, putting on cologne and looking nice. I was constantly being razzed on my floor for being gay. I'm not gay. I'm metrosexual, thank you very much. The rumors of my gayness were put to bed the first time I hooked up with Tanya. After that, they worshipped the ground I walked on. I retrospect; I should let them continue to think that I was gay and left Tanya alone.

When I had my piano lesson on Wednesday, Benjamin was not happy with my hand injury. It was significantly better but my movements were stiff. We couldn't do much during my lesson but work on the left hand of my pieces. He told me to see the campus doctor if it continued to bother me. I told him that it would be fine. I informed him that I was heading home on Friday and my father could take a look at it. He seemed to be okay with that solution.

The rest of the week was pretty low-key. Bella and I didn't get a ton of time to ourselves, unfortunately. The only time we had to ourselves was after Emerson Express rehearsal. Felix informed us of our performance schedule. We had some local performances starting in the end of October. There was one opportunity for an overnight trip in the second week of November.

We worked on two pieces. We added a ballad, "No Air," and another faster piece, a Gloria Estefan medley. For the slower piece, the choreography was pretty much stationary. I was paired up with Jessica Stanley who got very handsy with me during rehearsal. I rolled my eyes at her bluntness. I saw Bella giggling from her spot with Ben.

The second piece we would learn the choreography over two rehearsals. I started out with Tia, who was still bitter over Bella's appointment as section leader. Bella was with another tenor, Joshua, whom I didn't know. For the

## La Cantante

second formation, I was paired with Bella and we were to do this intricate lift. I had done it before in the show last year. Bella fumbled a few times with the lift, but we eventually got it. We ran through the pieces that we had learned so far: "River Deep, Mountain High," "No Air," and the medley. The show was looking and sounding good. Felix ended rehearsal early so the girls could try on their costumes and bring them home. Bella was one of the first ones to go. She dashed into the green room of the auditorium and quickly tried on her costume. She walked out about five minutes later with a navy blue garment bag and a shoe box. She had the cutest scowl on her face.

"What's wrong, beautiful?" I asked.

"I'll show you when we get back to the dorm," she retorted. I grabbed both of our bags and we headed back to Patterson. We walked up to Bella's room. Rosalie was the only one there. Bella asked me to wait in the room and she would show me her "problem." I looked at Rosalie with a smirk. Rosalie just shrugged in response. A few minutes Bella walked out of the bathroom. She was wearing the show choir dress. It was a periwinkle blue/lilac color with sequins on the bodice. It was one-shouldered and the skirt flared out at her waist. On her feet were a pair of flesh toned character shoes that were high.

"This is what's wrong. These dresses are hideous. I mean nasty, Edward!" she whined.

I brought my hand up to my lips and tapped my fingers there. With my other hand, I indicated for her to turn around. She rolled her eyes and did so. When she face back to me, she put her hands on her hips and tapped her foot. It was absolutely adorable.

"Truth?" I asked.

"No, I want you to lie. I know they are disgusting," she snorted. Rose giggled from her bed.

"Honestly, you look hot. These dresses are a thousand times better than the ones from last year. They were a funny shade of green with black sequins," I

responded thoughtfully.

"Edward, I look ridiculous," she moaned. I walked over to her and pulled her into a hug. She dejectedly put her arms around my waist.

"Bella, you could wear a paper bag and you would look amazing. Do one thing for me though," I said as I leaned into her ear, "don't wear any underwear under your spankies." Then she smacked me.

"Perv."

"But I'm your perv. Love you, Bella."

"Love you too, perv."

xx LC xx

Friday was incredibly dreary. Bella was in a good mood. She said that weather reminded her of the weather in Forks. I teased her that she was the only one who would find the rainy, dreary weather a good thing. She said that if I ever visited her in Forks that I would understand. Little did she know that I was planning on flying out to Washington on December 26th to surprise her.

We went to theory and found out that Larry was not there. His daughter was sick and he couldn't come in. James was leading the class. It was awful. I think my dead cat could have done a better job than James. Bella and I had a good grip on the concept that he was trying to teach and we were confused by the end of the class. It did prevent James from ogling Bella. He was too nervous in giving the lecture for the class to eye-fuck my girlfriend.

After theory, Bella and I got some breakfast at The Cage. We decided that we would leave after my biochemistry class to head up to my old high school for her observation hours. Bella had informed her psychology professor and Eleazar that she would not be in class. They were both fine with it. I told Bella to pack a bag because I had planned on staying over at my parents' house after dinner. I also wanted her all to myself for a couple of days. When we finished

## La Cantante

breakfast, I headed to biochemistry and she went to her education class. We decided that we would meet up at her room afterward to head out to my former high school. She also wanted to change and look more professional.

Biochemistry was confusing, as usual. When class was over, I dashed out of the room and went back to Patterson. I packed a few things into a duffle bag, grabbed my guitar and went to Bella's room. I knocked on the door and Alice opened it up.

"Hey, green-eyed freak," she said with a smile.

"Hey, shortie. Is Bella here?" I asked.

"She's changing. She'll be out in a bit. Say hi to Mom and Dad for me, will ya?"

"Will do, pix."

"I gotta jet. I have one of my art classes in a bit and I need to put some finishing touches on my project that's due today," Alice said as she breezed out of the room. "Have fun, big brother!"

As Alice was leaving, Bella stepped out of the bathroom. She looked dramatically different from this morning. She was wearing a navy blue pant suit with a pale blue blouse. Her hair was pulled off of her face with a clip. She also had her glasses on.

*Damn sexy librarian. I want to bend her over the circulation desk. Fuck!*

I looked down at what I was wearing and I felt like a total schlub: a pair of jeans with a black plaid button up shirt. I quirked an eyebrow at Bella. She shook her head.

"Should I change?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"Edward, you're fine. You are visiting your old choir director. I'm going there in a professional capacity. I need to look the part. Besides, I still look like a high school student."

"Not dressed like that. I never thought I would say this, but you make a pant suit look hot."

"You are a dork. I feel like a librarian. All constricted and shit. I hate it," she grumbled.

"If my librarian looked like you, Bella. I would have read a lot more books," I replied seductively. "Come on. I've got "Hot for Teacher" going through my head and we better leave before I ravish you. Is this your bag?"

"Yeah. Let me grab my messenger bag and we're good to go," Bella replied. She grabbed her messenger bag and purse. She also double checked to see if she had her cell phone and charger. She gave me a brief nod and we headed out to my car.

It took about an hour and a half to get to my old high school. I pulled into the visitor's parking spot and we walked to the front office. I was recognized by the secretary there, Mrs. Cope.

"Mr. Cullen! What a pleasant surprise!" Mrs. Cope cried. She came around the desk and enveloped me in a motherly hug. I returned it happily. Mrs. Cope was one of the nicest ladies on the planet. "What can I do for you, Edward?"

"I'm here to visit Mr. Sisko and my girlfriend is here to observe him. Mrs. Cope, this is Bella Swan, my girlfriend. Bella, this is my other girlfriend, Mrs. Cope," I teased.

"Nice to meet you, Mrs. Cope," Bella said politely.

"Oh, stop it Edward. You know I'm a happily married woman," she snorted. "Nice to meet you as well, Bella."

## La Cantante

"That's only because I was too young for you, Mrs. Cope," I joked. She rolled her eyes and went to call down to Garrett. She spoke with him and nodded a few times. She turned her attention back to Bella and me.

"You're all set. You will need to wear these visitor passes while you are in the building. Edward you know where to go. Be sure to swing by the office before you leave to drop off the passes. Have fun, Bella dear."

"Thank you, Mrs. Cope," I said as I led Bella out of the office. We walked down the hallways to the choir room. I led Bella to Garrett's office. He didn't have a class right now and he was probably working on a program or arranging something. Garrett was a stickler for unique choral arrangements. He didn't want us to be bored so he arranged most of the songs we sang. He sold a few to choral music publishers, but not enough to quit teaching. I don't think he ever would if he became a big-time choral arranger. He enjoyed working with kids too much.

I lightly rapped on the door of Garrett's office. It was open and he was in there. However, I didn't want to assume anything. Garrett was a wonderful choral director and a good friend. He did have a temperamental streak. He could fly off of the handle over the smallest thing. Garrett turned when he heard the knock.

"Edward! It's so good to see you!" he exclaimed as he gave me a hug. "I should have flunked you to keep you around. How's Emerson?"

"Good. Busy but good. Garrett, this is my girlfriend, Isabella Swan," I said as I pushed Bella toward Garrett.

She took a few tentative steps and held her hand out. "Nice to meet you, Mr. Sisko. I look forward to working with you."

"Please, call me Garrett. Well in here. When we're in front of students it will be Mr. Sisko. I look forward to working with you as well, Isabella. From our phone conversation, you seem like an excellent musician and will make an excellent teacher. So, I was thinking that today you would do some observing

## La Cantante

and perhaps you could sit in with the students and help as needed. The next time you come in you could lead a portion of a rehearsal. Before you're done, you'll be writing up rehearsal plans and working with the groups with me as the accompaniment. Does that work for you?"

"Sounds great. I do need you to sign off on my time with you at the end of each day," Bella said as she pulled out some paperwork from her bag. Garrett reached for it and signed in the appropriate spot and handed it back to Bella.

"Here's the plan for the rest of my day. Right now, I have my plan period. You missed my group of freshman girls. They meet during third period. The groups you will see are the treble choir, mixed choir and concert choir. Treble choir is a group of intermediate level women. They sing in two to four part harmony. Mixed choir is a group open to any student, no singing experience needed. We usually start in three part mixed at the beginning of the year. Hopefully by the end, they are singing in a traditional four part mixed style. Concert choir is the top level group. They sing in four part mixed to eight part mixed. I do have a few extracurricular choirs. Bel Canto is my auditioned women's group. The Other Guys is the men's group. I also have a show choir/vocal jazz group called Take Five. Edward was involved in most of the singing groups in his high school career. The only ones he wasn't involved in was...nope he worked with all of 'em."

"Umm...he's not a girl, Garrett," Bella giggled.

"He accompanied for those groups. Saved me a buttload of money in accompaniment fees."

"I still play for him in a pinch. Though, I do charge now," I sniggered. The bell rang and I heard the bustle in the choir room. Garrett grabbed his folder off his desk and nodded to the room. Bella grabbed a notebook and pen and followed him. I was close behind. I went and plopped down behind the piano. Garrett beamed and handed me a folder from the cabinet. I glanced through the music and it was an easy read.



## La Cantante

The bell rang a second time and Garrett began his rehearsal. He did some brief physical warm ups. He asked for a chord and I played it for him. He demonstrated his vocal warm up and his treble choir copied it. Garrett and I fell into an easy pattern. Bella was furiously scribbling notes from the back of the room. Garrett finished his warm up with sight reading. It was written on the board. He asked me to play the key and the tonic note. He walked the choir through some basic questions and they answered with ease. He asked for the chord and tonic note again and I complied. The treble choir thought through their sight reading. Garrett nodded my direction and I played again. He gave a steady beat and they sang it through. Not perfectly, but got through it. He pointed out some minor mistakes and they did it again, with the mistakes corrected.

"Good afternoon, ladies! Happy Friday! I'd like to introduce some special guests today. As you can see, we have a piano player. This young man is Edward Cullen. He's an alumnus of the school. He graduated in 2008. He's a sophomore at Emerson University and he wanted to visit us. With him, he brought Ms. Swan. She's a music education major and she's going to be working with us for next few weeks doing some observations, rehearsing with you and eventually conducting you. So, welcome Edward and Ms. Swan. Please take out "Metsa Telegramme."

The rest of the rehearsal went very smoothly, as did the rest of the day. Bella helped in sectionals in treble choir. We both helped in sectionals in concert choir. I enjoyed playing for Garrett and Bella. They also seemed to be getting along very well. At the end of the day, I could tell Bella was exhausted but happy. Hell, I was exhausted and all I did was play the piano.

"So, Isabella. What did you think?" Garrett asked.

"Wow! You really run a tight ship. I'm very excited to work with you. I've taken some very detailed notes and I can't wait to try them. Your concert repertoire is very diverse and the pace of your rehearsal is quick, but very detail oriented."

## La Cantante

"A very apt assessment, Ms. Swan. You are going to be a fantastic choral director if you keep thinking like that. Thank you for stepping in during sectionals. It's rare for a novice teacher to jump in like that. It's refreshing to see that. Just to let you know, when you begin your secondary methods courses and student teaching, I'm going to contact Emerson University and request you work with me."

"Thank you, Garrett. That means a lot to me," she said proudly.

"I'll see you next week, Isabella. Edward, are you coming next week?"

"Probably not," I replied.

"That's good. I want to know how her piano skills are. She can't rely on a piano virtuoso to help out all of the time," he said with a wink. Bella blushed.

"I'll probably be here about an hour later next time, Garrett. I had to miss a few classes today. I don't want to make that a habit."

"That's fine, Bella. I'll see you next week," he said as he shook her hand.

"See you next week," she replied.

"It was great to see you, Edward. Come back soon," Garrett smiled.

"I hope so," I said as I headed out of the choir room. Bella waved as she followed. We walked back to the front office and dropped off our visitor passes. Mrs. Cope gave me and Bella a hug goodbye. We both slid into the car and Bella was bouncing in her seat.

"Oh my God! That was so awesome. You are so lucky to work with such an amazing director as a high school student. Thank you for arranging for us to work together," Bella gushed.

"Bella, I just emailed a friend and got a phone number for you. You arranged to work together. However, you are quite welcome."

## La Cantante

"I got some good ideas to use for warm-ups and I wrote down the entire repertoire that he had for my list of songs I want to do."

"I'm so happy for you, Bella. I love you, baby."

"I love you too, Edward."

"So, are you ready to meet my parents?"

"Oh crap."

**Sorry, cliffie...kind of.**

# Dinner with the Cullens

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## Chapter 18: Dinner with the Cullens

### EPOV

*" Oh my God! That was so awesome. You are so lucky to work with such an amazing director as a high school student. Thank you for arranging for us to work together," Bella gushed.*

*" Bella, I just emailed a friend and got a phone number for you. You arranged to work together. However, you are quite welcome."*

*" I got some good ideas to use for warm-ups and I wrote down the entire repertoire that he had for my list of songs I want to do."*

*" I'm so happy for you, Bella. I love you, baby."*

*" I love you too, Edward."*

*" So, are you ready to meet my parents?" I asked.*

*" Oh crap."*

### BPOV

Was I ready to meet Edward's parents? Will they like me? Will they think that I'm good enough for their son? I don't know if I can do this. Holy shit!

## La Cantante

Edward seemed to sense my fears and grabbed my hand in both of his. He gently kissed my knuckles. "Baby, they are going to love you. They already do," he cooed.

I nodded dumbly and took a steadying breath. I pulled my hand from Edward's grasp and he started the car. He smoothly backed up and left the school parking lot. I vaguely remembered the ride to Edward's home. I was too busy concentrating on not puking all over his car. About fifteen minutes after we left the school we pulled onto a wooded driveway. It looped and turned. Through a small clearing in the trees, I could see this massive house. No, scratch that. A fricking mansion. I could fit five my homes in Forks in this huge place. My jaw came unhinged as we pulled up on the circular drive. I felt Edward take his finger and slowly close my mouth.

"You're catching flies, Bella," he chuckled.

"That's not a house, Edward. That's a frickin' all-inclusive resort. Jeez. You live here?" I mused.

"Yep. Come on. Esme is waiting," Edward replied as he parked the car and turned off the engine. He opened up the door and went to get the bags out of the trunk. I was rooted in my seat. I couldn't move. I looked at the house where my boyfriend grew up and I was shocked. I was pulled out of my reverie when Edward opened the passenger door. "The house doesn't move. You have to walk to it. Do you need me to carry you?"

"No," I squeaked. I scrambled out of the car and managed to trip over my own feet. I thankfully didn't fall to the ground as Edward caught my arms.

"Are you sure you can walk? You are very clumsy today, woman."

"It's not every day I meet my boyfriend's parents in a luxury hotel. I'm just a bit distracted and nervous."

Edward gazed into my eyes. His forest green orbs were twinkling with something. Mischief? Anger? Happiness? I couldn't pinpoint the emotion. He

## La Cantante

gently cupped my chin and he swept his thumb over my bottom lip. I felt the shiver of energy bolt through my body. He leaned in and gave me a brief, but searing, gut-wrenching kiss. He pulled away and his eyes were nearly black. "Is your mind on something else, now?"

I nodded and he laced my fingers with his. I pulled my messenger bag over my shoulder and we walked up to the massive front door. Edward opened the door and we walked into a massive foyer. To the left was a sweeping staircase and a grand piano. In front of me was a lofty, open living room decorated in rich, plush fabrics. To my right was the dining room and a long hallway. I latched onto Edward, almost in fear that I would break something. It all looked so opulent and lavish. I felt like I didn't belong. I was completely intimidated by the house. I can only imagine what else to expect.

I heard some faint clicking sounds and I turned toward them. Walking toward Edward and I was a petite woman who looked to be in her late forties, early fifties with caramel colored hair and bright hazel eyes. She looked perfect, in a pair of black dress pants and a cream-colored cardigan set.

"Edward, my sweet boy," she crooned. Edward let go of me and wrapped his arms around the small woman. He pressed a sweet kiss to the top of her head as they swayed back and forth.

Edward pulled away and turned to me. He looked at me lovingly. "Mom, this is my Bella. Bella, this is my mom, Esme Cullen," he said warmly as he walked behind me and put his arms around my waist.

I stuck out my hand for her to shake it. She pulled me out of Edward's hold and enveloped me in a motherly hug. "It's lovely to meet you, Bella. I've heard so much about you from both of my children," she said as she smoothed my hair.

"It's nice to meet you too, Mrs. Cullen," I replied gently.

"Psssh! Mrs. Cullen is my mother-in-law. Call me Esme. Edward, can you bring up Bella's bags to her room? Bella, come with me in the kitchen and let's have a snack," she said as she guided me to the kitchen. Edward grabbed our

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bags and dashed up the stairs. I followed Esme to the massive kitchen. It had a large center island with a stove and oven. There was also a second professional stove along the back wall. The kitchen was decorated in rich, deep browns and had a rooster theme. It was very elegant, but kitsch at the same time.

"You look very nice, Bella. Please don't tell me you got dressed up to meet us," she chided.

I chuckled. "No, Mrs. Cullen...erm, Esme. Edward was kind of enough to make arrangements for me to work with Garrett Sisko at his old high school for my observation hours for an education course I'm taking. I'm enrolled at Emerson as a vocal music education major. I need to complete ten hours for the introduction to education class. I didn't know anybody and Edward helped out," I explained.

"Well, you look quite lovely. Very professional. I'm certain that Garrett was quite impressed," Esme replied with a smile. "Would like something to drink?"

"Ah, water, please."

Esme scurried around the kitchen and got me a glass of water. She placed a slice of lemon on the top. She also pulled out a plate of cookies and small sandwiches. Edward strolled into the kitchen and stuck his head in the refrigerator, grabbing a pop. He settled himself on one of the stools by the center island and wolfed down a few of the sandwiches. Esme's jaw dropped and she smacked him upside the head.

"Ow! What was that for?" he griped.

"Where were you raised? A barn? Have you no manners, Edward Anthony Masen Cullen?" Esme bellowed.

"Sorry, Mom," Edward replied contritely. "Would like a sandwich, Bella?"

I giggled at their interaction. I saw the Esme was not really mad at her son, but Edward's cheeks were tinged pink in embarrassment. "I'm fine. Thank you,

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Edward."

"Please excuse my son. He was raised with manners. I hope he's treating you well," Esme said.

"He's wonderful. I couldn't ask for a better boyfriend," I replied as I leaned closer to Edward and ruffled his hair. He pulled my hand from his hair and kissed my knuckles before he linked his fingers with mine.

"I'm the lucky one, Esme. I haven't felt this complete since my mother passed away. Bella fills the void that was created when she died. *È il mio cantante. Ora e per sempre. L'amo*," Edward said thoughtfully. His green eyes bore into mine with such emotion and passion. Esme gasped and she rushed around the island and gave both of us a bone-crushing hug.

"Oh, I'm so happy for both of you!" she squealed in an Alice-like fashion. "So, tell me, how did you meet and when did you come to the realization that she was your singer?"

Edward gave my knee a light squeeze and told our story about how we met and my singing with Breaking Midnight. We talked for about an hour when Esme shooed us out of the kitchen, proclaiming that she needed to get dinner ready. She told Edward to show me the house and where I was sleeping tonight. Esme then pushed us out of the kitchen back into the living room. Edward grabbed my hand and pulled me closer. His other arm snaked around my waist and he brushed his lips against mine.

"*Il mio cantante. Il mio bel cantante*," Edward whispered against my lips. I melted against his body but all-too-soon he pulled away and led me up the stairs. Edward showed me all the different rooms. He also showed me where he put my bag and where I would be sleeping tonight. We came to the last door and he looked at me sheepishly, "This is my room."

He opened the door to his bedroom and pulled me in. It was very spacious with a large king-sized bed in the center of the room. The walls were painted warm golden color and his bedroom furniture was black and sleek. On his bed was



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very masculine but comfortable amber duvet cover and huge pile of pillows. Along the opposite wall of his room was a plasma screen television mounted on the wall over a black entertainment center. To the right of the television was a large bookcase filled with thousands of CDs and records. His room seemed very warm and inviting. Very Edward.

I took a tentative step into the room and walked toward the bed. I ran my hand over the lush fabric. Edward was right on my heels. He took my hand and led me to another door in the room. He opened it and a small music room was revealed. It had an upright piano, several guitars, a mandolin and a very expensive keyboard. On one of the walls, a mural of piano keys and music notes was sprawled across it. Edward walked to the mural and glided his hands along it.

"This is my tattoo. I took a picture of it and had it done on my hip. It's not exactly the same, but this was the inspiration. At the time, my music was my greatest love," Edward said softly. "That's changed now. My greatest love is you, Bella. Come and let me show you something."

He pulled me to the upright piano in the corner of the room. We both sat down on the piano bench. He opened the lid and ran his fingers over the keys. He warmed up his hands with some scales. He looked at me and gave me a smile. It didn't quite reach his eyes. There was nervousness in them. I couldn't even fathom why.

Edward took a deep breath and began playing a soft, soothing piece of music. A lullaby. The chords were full and rich. The beginning of the piece was filled with sadness. As the song continued, the notes began to ring with happiness and love. When the last note resonated through the small room, I realized what that was. The tears fell freely from my eyes.

"Edward..." I whispered. "That was beautiful."

"It should be. It was you," Edward replied, his voice thick with emotion. "I love you so much, Bella. I cannot express how much I love you. I wanted to show you in the music. That lullaby is the closest thing..."

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I couldn't help it and I crushed my lips against his, nearly causing him to fall off of the bench. He steadied himself and fisted his hands into my hair. Our lips moved together, in a sensual dance. I thrust my tongue into his warm mouth and he whimpered. He tightened his hold on my hair and pulled my head to one side and began sucking and nibbling down my neck. I moaned at his touch, begging for more.

He kissed his way back up my neck and suckled on my earlobe. His hands moved from my hair and unbuttoned my suit jacket. He palmed my left breast and his thumb flicked over my nipple. I traced down his chest and ran my hand over his hip where his tattoo was. I decided to be bold and continue my hand to his straining erection in his jeans. I gripped his cock through his pants and his hips bucked at my touch. He pulled his face away from me and rested his forehead against mine. He removed his hand from my breast and I pulled my hand away from his cock. We both tried to calm our erratic breathing.

Edward scooted back and smoothed out my hair. "To be continued?" he asked hopefully.

"Oh, yeah," I breathed. "Thank you, Edward. I am beyond speechless. Just...thank you. I love you."

"I love you more, Bella. So much more," he replied as he placed a chaste kiss on my lips.

xx LC xx

After our little make out session in Edward's music room, he led me to the guest room where he deposited my bags. I wanted to change before dinner. As much as I like wearing a suit...

*NOT!*

I needed to get out of the damn thing. I put on a pair of dark wash, distressed jeans, and a periwinkle v-neck sweater. I slipped on a pair of ballet flats and released my hair from the clip. With a quick hair flip, I felt much more relaxed

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and comfortable. I padded down the stairs and I heard Edward playing the piano in the living room. I walked to him and sat next to him on the piano bench.

I leaned in and breathed in his ear, "This piano is gorgeous, but I like the one upstairs better."

Edward's fingers fumbled over a few notes at my admission. He turned and narrowed his eyes at me. "Tease. You'll pay for that, Swan."

"I'm not a tease when I intend follow through," I replied, looking up through my lashes. More fumbled notes. "I can't wait until 'when,' baby."

"Me neither, Bella," he said as he pulled his hands away from the keyboard. He pulled my body close and he pressed his lips to my ear. "I intend to worship every inch of your beautiful body. You are going to feel so good, you'll never want to get out of bed."

*I think I need new panties.*

My eyes rolled in my head at his words. He licked the shell of my earlobe and continued his sensual assault. "I'm going to make you scream my name and beg for more, Isabella. I can't wait until you are mine, completely. I cannot wait until I can show you how much I love you, how much I need you. I'm getting hard just imagining you beneath me, writhing in ecstasy."

I whimpered as he moved away with a smug smirk and went back to playing whatever piece of music he was playing. I shifted uncomfortably and glared at him. "Now, who's the tease, Edward?"

"A wise woman said that you're not a tease if you intend to follow through, baby. I fully intend to follow through. On. Every. Word."

*Can 'when' be now? Please?*

"I'm going to see if Esme needs any help in the kitchen," I squeaked.

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"Have fun, baby," Edward replied with a crooked grin.

*Oh what that boy does to my girlie bits.*

I walked into the kitchen and saw Esme moving gracefully around her kitchen. She was cutting up some vegetables while something was cooking on the stove.

"Can I do something to help, Esme?" I asked politely.

"Could you finish chopping up these veggies?" she responded with a warm smile.

"Sure." I picked up the knife and continued chopping the vegetables in front of me. Esme put a bowl down and I put the finished vegetables into the bowl. "So, what do you do, Esme?"

"I'm an interior designer. I own a private design firm in town. I designed this house, but I have enjoy restoring and recreating historical houses and monuments. My hours are pretty flexible, as I'm the boss. I took a half day today so I could meet you and Edward when you came to see us," Esme explained.

"You have a beautiful home," I said quietly.

"Thank you, Bella. I take great pride in my work. However, I'm more proud of my children and family. I'm grateful you came into their lives."

I smiled and continued chopping the veggies. Esme busied herself with preparing some pasta. As we were working, I heard the garage door open and in walked an older gentleman with blonde hair that was graying at the temples and the same green eyes as Edward. He put his briefcase by the door and strode to Esme. He pulled away from the stove and gave her a kiss. Edward must have the garage door as well and he walked into the kitchen and loudly cleared his throat.

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"Hello, Dad," Edward said with an embarrassed grin. "Stop making out with, Mom. You have company."

"Oh, Sorry," he replied. He turned to face his son who was standing behind me, idly playing with my hair. "I'm Dr. Carlisle Cullen. You must be Bella."

He walked toward me and pulled me into a tight hug.

*Apparently the Cullens are huggers. That's something I need to get used to.*

"Nice to meet you, Dr. Cullen," I responded politely after he released me.

"Please, call me Carlisle. I'm only Dr. Cullen in the office," he said sweetly. He grabbed my hand and kissed the back of it.

"Hey, hey, hey...old man. Keep your paws off my girlfriend," Edward chided.

"She's lovely, Edward. I can see why you are so taken. I've heard nothing but wonderful things about you, Bella. Alice is always raving about how sweet you are and Edward is raving about your intellect, beauty and talent. I really can't wait to get to know you better, my dear," Carlisle said with a gentle smile. "I'm going to change out of the monkey suit. I'll be back in a spell."

Carlisle loped gracefully out of the kitchen and went upstairs. Esme put a pile of plates and silverware in front of Edward. She pointed to the table and he grumbled before he went to set it. After cutting the vegetables, I began making a salad. After fifteen minutes, our dinner was ready and were all sitting at the kitchen table enjoying the delicious meal.

"This is really good, Esme. I may have to ask for the recipe. My father would like this," I said.

"I'll make sure to give it to you before you leave. So, where are you from, Bella?" Esme asked.

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"I was born in Forks, Washington. I lived there until I was five. My parents got divorced and then moved to Arizona with my mom. I lived there until I was a freshman and then moved back to Forks. My mom remarried a minor league baseball player and they traveled a lot. I stayed there until I graduated from high school and came here," I responded.

"What do your parents do, Bella?" Carlisle asked as he took a bite of the salad.

"My mom was an elementary school teacher. When she married Phil, my step-dad, she resigned from her job so she could travel with him. When she's not traveling with him, she's a substitute teacher. My dad was the Police Chief in Forks until he broke his leg. He tried to go back after he was injured, but he wasn't fast enough anymore and so he retired. He's now a private investigator. He hates it," I snorted. "My brother, Emmett, is a junior at Emerson."

"Emmett lives with Jasper and I in Patterson. He's a good guy. Huge!" Edward said in between bites of dinner.

"So, Bella. Alice tells me that you are a music education major. Why did you decide on that?" Carlisle pressed.

"I love music. It's been my passion and my one constant in my life. I decided to come to Emerson because of Dr. Eleazar Santiago. He's an amazing director, composer and conductor. I'm thrilled to be working with him. I actually had an opportunity today to work Edward's old high school director for some observation hours and it further solidified my decision to be a music teacher."

"Are you an instrumentalist or a vocalist, Bella?" Esme asked sweetly.

"I'm a singer by heart. However, I am fairly skilled at the piano and guitar. If I had to classify myself, I would call myself a vocalist," I responded timidly.

"She's the best singer I've ever heard, Mom. She sounds like an angel. She also is one of the strongest sight-readers I've ever seen. She was actually offered the position of soprano section leader in University Singers and took it. She has poise, confidence and kicks ass in front of a choral group," Edward beamed.

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I blushed at his words. "Thank you, Edward. I just do what I'm comfortable with," I said quietly.

"Well, I look forward to hearing you sing, Bella. When is the concert?" Carlisle asked.

"It's right before Thanksgiving," Edward said. "That weekend before the Thanksgiving break."

"Well, we'll be there! So, Edward how are your studies?" Carlisle asked as he pushed his plate away.

"Fine, I suppose. I'm struggling with biochemistry. I have a good lab partner and he's helping me a great deal. I met with the professor and he assisted me as well. I just have a hard time with the chemistry stuff. Biology, not so much. The rest of my classes are good though," Edward replied as he fiddled with his placemat. He looked like he wanted to say more, but didn't.

"If you have your biochemistry textbook with you, I could see if I can help you out, Edward," Carlisle offered. "Perhaps after dinner?"

"Sure. That would be great," Edward mumbled dejectedly.

"Try not to sound so enthused, Edward. I know that you don't enjoy chemistry or science for that matter, but it was your decision to be pre-med. You need to stick through it," Carlisle warned.

Edward's eyes clamped shut and his fists curled. I gently rubbed his back and I could feel the tension there. I knew that Edward's love was music. He didn't want to disappoint his father. Edward was conflicted in his choice. I felt so helpless. I couldn't do anything to help him.

"I know, Carlisle. I know. Let me grab my books and we can get through this, okay?" Edward said tightly.

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Carlisle nodded curtly and Edward went up to his room. Esme and I began to clear the table. Carlisle disappeared and I assumed that Edward went with him.

I felt so badly for Edward. It was written all over my face.

"It was a huge point of contention in the house for a long time," Esme said quietly. "Edward wanted to be music major so badly. I can understand why. He's so incredibly talented. However, Carlisle did not agree with his choice. He probably would be more agreeable if Edward decided to be a music education major, as it has more financial stability. Edward just wants to perform. I've tried to sway Carlisle, but he's not budging. He's going to push Edward away."

I looked at Esme and she had a sad, faraway look in her hazel eyes. "Edward has the sense of obligation to Carlisle. He feels the need to pay him back," Esme continued.

"Why?" I asked.

"Edward told you about his parents, right?" I nodded. "Elizabeth, Edward's mother, was Carlisle's sister. When she died and Edward Sr. signed over his parental rights, Edward felt he needed to work to stay here. We told him that was not the case. We loved him like he was our own son. He still worked very hard at everything he did. Edward said that he would become a doctor, like Carlisle to make his mother and us proud. He's incredibly stubborn, just like Carlisle, but I can see the pain in my son's eyes when he talks about his classes. That pain disappears when he performs. I'm afraid that my son is going to break and there is nothing I can do about it."

"Edward told me he is a music minor. That has to bring him some happiness, right?" I asked.

"It does, but probably not enough as Edward completely immersing himself into music. His mother raised him to love music and he wants to carry out her wishes as well. I just don't know how. It pains me to see my husband and my son be at odds with each other," Esme said with tears in her eyes. I tentatively reached over to Esme and rubbed her shoulder. She put her small hand over



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mine and gave me sad smile. "I'm sorry for dumping all of this on you, Bella. Thank you for listening."

"It's not a problem. Is there anything I can do to help?" I asked gently.

"Be with him. Love him. Support him," she stated simply as she squeezed my hand. Esme turned to finish doing the dishes and I went to finish clearing off the table.

Edward came back into the kitchen and he was pinching the bridge of nose with one hand and was clenching his biochemistry book with another. He looked like he wanted to launch the book into the fireplace. He plopped down in one of the kitchen chairs, slammed the book down and put his head in his arms. I sat down in the chair opposite of him and gently rubbed his bicep. He lifted his head and I could see the sadness in his eyes that Esme mentioned earlier. There was also a great deal of frustration and resentment. I reached over and caressed his cheek and he leaned into my hand. I glided my thumbs over his lips and I gave him an encouraging smile. Edward turned his head and kissed the palm of my hand and held it to his cheek.

"Thank you, baby," he said quietly.

"For what?" I asked.

"For knowing exactly what I needed. Come on. I want to show you something," Edward said as he pushed out the chair. I scooted out and followed him. He looked down at my feet. "Do you have sneakers with you?"

"Uh, no. Do I need them?" I asked. He told me to wait with his eyes and he dashed into the laundry room. He returned with a pair of socks and pair of Nikes that were presumably Alice's or Esme's. He handed me the shoes and socks and I quickly put them on. Edward went into a hall closet and pulled out a fleece and a blanket. After I put on the shoes, Edward took my hand and led me out the back door. We walked past the pool that they had in their backyard to a small trail in the woods behind their house. We traversed slowly through the trail until we came to a small field.

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The field was a perfect circle. It had the remnants of beautiful wildflowers and we could see the leaves begin to change. In the center of the field was a fallen tree. It appeared to be there for many years, as it was covered in moss. Edward squeezed my hand and we walked toward the tree. He spread out the blanket on the ground and gracefully plopped down onto it. I followed suit, in my traditionally clumsy form.

I looked around the field and was surprised at how quiet it was. I could only hear the leaves blowing in the slight breeze, a few birds and Edward and my breathing. It was so peaceful.

"This so beautiful, Edward. It's amazing it's in your backyard, literally," I mused.

"I like to come here when I need to think. I would bring my staff paper, a blanket and sit for hours just jotting down ideas for songs. It's my sanctuary," he said as he leant against the tree. "I've always come here alone because usually when I want to be here, I'm a broody, pain in the ass. I'm still brooding, but I want to have a different memory here. A memory of being here with the love of my life who bring me happiness, calm and joy."

"Esme told me about your disagreement with Carlisle," I said as I drew my knees to my body. "I'm so sorry, Edward. I can't imagine not being able to do what you dream about."

"I figured that when you comforted me in the kitchen. I thought I was over it. That I was okay with my decision. When I was working with Carlisle on my biochemistry issues, it hit me full force that I do NOT want to be a doctor. It's not my love. My love is music. There's no way for me get Carlisle to understand that. It's the one thing that connects me to my mom," Edward said as a single tear fell down his cheek. "I miss her so much, Bella. Each day that she's gone, I forget another detail about her. Playing music helps me remember her. He just doesn't get it."

I unfolded myself and crawled toward Edward. I wrapped my arms around his neck and scratched his scalp with my fingers. I felt Edward sob against me. I

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held tightly as I could, providing comfort as best as I could. We sat there in this comforting embrace for an immeasurable amount of time. Edward had calmed himself down. He hastily wiped his cheeks with the back of his hand. He looked at me with sad look in his eyes. I brushed my knuckles across his damp cheeks.

"Have you told Carlisle what you just told me?" I asked.

He nodded. "Being a musician is not a stable enough of a career in his eyes. Money is not the issue, really. When my mom died, all of her estate was left to me. In case you haven't figured it out, we have a ton of it. Money that is. I have a trust fund that I can access when I turn 21. My mom left me enough to have me be set for the rest of my life. I don't care about the money, though. I just want to be happy. I'm happy when I perform. I'm happiest when I perform with you. You are the missing piece, Bella. I just don't know how to make it fit."

"Well, we're two fairly educated young people. We can figure it out. Perhaps if we combined our mental resources, we can help Carlisle understand. However, whatever you do decide to do, know that I support you and I love you. Obviously I want you to be able to do what makes you happy, but if that doesn't happen, I'll do my best to support you in your career," I said sincerely.

Edward took my hands and pulled me into his lap. He kissed me fervently and muttered his appreciation. He held on to me so tightly, I thought I was going to break in two. We sat there until the dusk began to fall. Edward nudged me off his lap and he pulled me up. He folded the blanket and took my hand. We walked back to the house, with the help of a flashlight that I had on my keychain, in silence. When we got back to the house, Carlisle and Esme were sitting the family room watching some television.

"We were wondering where you two went off to," Esme said. "Is everything alright?"

We both nodded. Carlisle closely regarded his son with skeptical eyes. He appeared to know that he cause Edward a great deal of distress. Carlisle just smiled tightly and returned his attention to the television.

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"We're going to go upstairs and watch a movie. See you tomorrow," Edward said to his mom.

"When are you guys heading back to Emerson?" Esme asked.

"Probably pretty early. We have to meet up with the other section leaders of University Singers before the opening home football game to run the 'Star Spangled Banner,'" Edward explained. "We need to be on the road by no later than noon."

"Okay, my sweet boy. I'll make breakfast. See you both in the morning. Good night, Bella," Esme said with a knowing smile.

"Good night, Esme and Carlisle. Thank you again for a delicious meal," I responded politely. Edward tugged on my hand and we ascended the stairs to his room. When we got in there, I noticed my bags were in his room. I gave him a pointed glare. His features lifted into a crooked grin. My favorite smile.

"Come on. You know that you weren't going to be sleeping alone. My parents know that I'm an adult and we're dating. It was either in the frilly, flowery guest room or my man cave," Edward said.

"I think I prefer the guest room," I said as I went to get my bags. Edward blocked the door with his body. He shut the door and locked it with a flick of the wrist. He let out a feral growl and moved toward me. He grabbed me and tossed me over his shoulders. I squealed and he swatted my ass.

"You got to be quiet, Swan. My parents are still awake," he hissed. He carried me to his bed. As he was walking me to his bed, I pinched his butt. He yelped in surprise. He flopped me down on the bed and he pinned my body with his. He swiveled his hips and I bit my lip to hold back a moan. "I want to bite that lip, Isabella. You have no idea what you do to me when you nibble on your lip like that."

"What do I do to you, Edward?" I purred. "Do I turn you on?"

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His eyes darkened with passion, "Immensely. I want you so badly. I want to make love to you. I want to feel your body against mine. I want to feel you come. I want you to be mine."

"I'm already yours, Edward. I love you."

Edward grabbed my hips and flipped us so I was straddling his waist. "As I love you, Isabella."

He sat up and cupped my face with his large, soft hands. He tenderly kissed both of my cheeks, my nose, and then finally my lips. He licked the edges of my mouth and teased my lips with his teeth. My breath was coming in erratic spurts. He pulled away, but I grabbed fistfuls of his hair and brought his face back to mine. I kissed his beautiful mouth. I bit down on his bottom lip and nibbled. He groaned as he reached for the hem of my sweater. He pulled it over my head. He lightly ran his finger tips up and down my arms, my chest, in between my breasts and finally circling my erect nipples. "So beautiful," he murmured.

I reached up and began unbuttoning his shirt. I removed it from his jeans and he shrugged it off and tossed it off of the bed. I gently pushed him down on to the bed. He scooted his body back on to the mound of pillows. He pulled me to him and gave me a kiss. He then pushed me away.

"Don't move, beautiful," he said as he scrambled out of the bed. He reached into a drawer in his dresser and pulled out a flame thrower. He lit a few candles around the room and turned off the overhead fan. The room was cast in a warm, golden glow. He crawled back onto the bed. He looked like a predator stalking his prey.

*I'll be his prey, any day. Come and get me, big boy!*

He pinned me beneath him again. I ran my hands up and down his strong back. The muscles contracted as my hands moved over them. I moved my hands to his hips and I lightly traced the tattoo that I was able to see. Edward's eyes closed at my touch. He moved his weight to one of his arms and he ran his

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fingers over my body. He leaned down and gave me a reverent kiss. He pulled away and licked, nibbled and sucked down my neck to my collarbones. He pressed several open mouthed kisses over my bra on my breasts. I arched my back at his expert touch. He gently pulled down on the strap of my light blue, lacy bra. My right breast fell free from the cup. He nibbled and sucked on the nipple. With his other hand, he massaged the other breast.

"Oh, Edward. That feels so good," I moaned.

He looked up at me through his long lashes. He grinned against my breast and moved to the other one. He reached behind me and unclasped my bra. He tossed it on the floor with my sweater and his shirt. I ran my fingers through his soft hair as he continued his sensual assault on my chest.

I could feel myself become more and more aroused as he worked. I could feel him through his jeans. He was right, there was nothing small about it. I scratched down his back with my fingernails and grabbed his ass. I pulled his hips to mine. His mouth returned to mine and he plunged his tongue into my mouth. He tasted so good.

I reached around to the front of his jeans and began unbuckling his belt. Edward pulled away and gave me a look. His muscles in his shoulders were tense. "Bella, what are you doing?" he warned.

"I want to feel you, baby," I breathed.

"Me first, beautiful," he said as he reached for the button of my jeans. He deftly undid and slowly lowered the zipper. I moaned and bucked my hips. Edward gently tugged on jeans and they moved down my legs. I kicked them off. I looked at Edward as I reached for the button of his jeans and unzipped his fly. He pushed them down and he was in nothing but his boxers as I was in nothing but a pair of lacy blue boyshorts. He rested on his side and looked at me lovingly. This was the most exposed I had ever been. The only people who saw me naked were my parents and I. Pretty soon, Edward would be added to that short list.

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Edward leaned in and pressed a kiss to my lips. His hands snaked around my waist and traveled up and down my torso. He gently pinched and flicked both of my nipples. He kissed down my body. He licked and flicked both of my breasts. He continued kissing further south and he nibbled around my navel. I giggled.

"That tickles, baby," I whispered.

He licked around the waistband of my panties as he lightly caressed my thighs. He took a deep breath and he smiled against my skin. "I can smell how turned on you, Bella. It's amazing. Can I touch you? Can I make you feel good?"

Not trusting my voice, I nodded. Edward kissed up my body. "Please let me know if it's too much. I don't want to rush you, baby."

"I want to do this, Edward. Please," I begged. He gently caressed my jaw and he kissed me tenderly. He deepened the kiss as his hand went further down my body. His hand moved to my inner things and he traced circles there. It felt amazing. His fingers moved to the edge of my panties and he lightly caressed the fabric over my heated core. My hips bucked at his tender caress. He moved his hand up to the top of my panties and he asked permission with his eyes. I nodded and he slipped his hand in my panties. His long, graceful fingers circled around my clit and saw stars. He kissed along my jaw line as he lightly touched my private place. I bit my lip to hold back the moans that were threatening to leave my body. He pulled away from my jaw and he stared into my eyes as he slipped a finger into me. My eyes closed and I arched my back. He slowly pumped his finger in and out. I could feel a delightful coil in my belly. He slipped in another finger.

"You're so wet, baby. So tight," Edward whispered in my ear. "You beautiful."

I couldn't respond. I was too focused on the feelings rising in my body. His thumb pressed against my clit and the coil in my belly released. I felt my muscles tighten and I lost all control. Edward covered my mouth with a deep and passionate kiss to dampen my cries. I slowly returned from my orgasm. Edward pulled his hand from my panties. He put his fingers in his mouth and

sucked them.

"You taste so good, Bella," he said as he greedily sucked his fingers. I grabbed his hand and I pulled his fingers into my mouth. I could taste myself on them. Edward's eyes widened as I nibbled on his fingers.

"Delicious. Probably not as good as you, handsome," I said with a seductive grin.

*Where the hell did that come from?*

"Holy fuck," Edward breathed. I pushed him back on his pillows and I kissed his chest. I licked his nipples as I idly traced patterns on his stomach. I ran my fingers through the coppery trail of hair leading down to his boxers. He flopped his head back on to the pillows. I moved my hand lower to the waistband of his boxers. I looked up at him and batted my eyelashes. He reached up and caressed my cheek as he nodded. I slipped my hand into his boxers and reached down to his cock.

"I don't know what to do, Edward. Can you help?" I asked coyly.

Edward brought in a sharp intake of breath. I pulled down his boxers so his cock was free from the fabric. He was breathing very erratically. I placed my hand around his cock and gently pumped. His hand closed around mine and we worked him together. I decided that boldness was the way to go and I kissed down his belly to his tattoo. I licked and nibbled on his tattoo. It was perfect, just like him. The black and grey ink was a huge contrast to his pale skin. I kissed to his cock and I took a tentative lick of the head. Edward's head popped up.

"Bella, you don't have to do this," he whimpered.

"I know. I want to. I want to make you feel good," I said quietly.

He grunted and he brushed my hair back off of my face. "I want to see you, baby."



## La Cantante

I maneuvered myself so I was between his legs. I took the head of his erection in my mouth and swirled my tongue around the tip. Edward moaned. I took him deeper in my mouth and what I couldn't reach, I used my hand. I sucked on Edward's beautiful dick and I could feel him move more underneath my touch. I began pumping faster and I lightly ran my teeth on his cock.

"Fuck, Bella. That feels amazing. Don't stop, baby."

I moved faster and with my other hand, I cupped his balls and massaged them. "Bella, I'm gonna come," he sputtered. I kept sucking and I could feel the muscles in his legs tighten. He released in my mouth and I swallowed everything he had to offer. It tasted a little sweet with a bit of tang. It was purely Edward.

"You definitely taste better, baby," I said as I laid my head on his chest. He was slightly sweaty and he was breathing very heavily.

"That was the best blowjob I ever had, baby. Are you sure you never done that before?" he rasped.

"Quite sure. You popped my blowjob cherry, Edward," I teased as I kissed his chest. I reached down and idly traced on his tattoo. Edward pulled his boxers back up. Edward got up and blew out the candles, leaving us in complete darkness. He pulled down the comforter and we snuggled underneath, not bothering to get dressed.

"I love you, Isabella Swan. I promise to love you for forever. Can I keep you?" Edward asked sweetly.

"Only if I get to keep you," I replied. "I love you so much, Edward."

"Always, Bella."

**Things got steamy for these two. Please be kind to my first real intense lemon. Thanks for reading!**

## La Cantante

**Hugs!**

**Translations:**

*È il mio cantante. Ora e per sempre. L'amo - She's my singer. Now and forever.  
I love her.*

*Il mio bel cantante - My beautiful singer*

# Football: The Great American Pastime

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine! Thank you especially to cullengirl08 for the kind words :)*

## Chapter 19: Football: The Great American Pastime

### EPOV

I woke up to an annoying, blaring noise.

*What. The. Fuck?*

I looked around my room and tried to locate the offensive sound. It was coming from Bella's bag. She was burrowed in the covers of my bed, her hair splayed over my pillows. She apparently got up during the night and put on my button-up shirt. She looked fucking incredible.

The blaring sound rang again. I walked over to her messenger bag and saw that it was her phone ringing. I looked at the caller ID and it was an unknown caller. I padded back to Bella's side of the bed, brushed her hair off of her face.

"Bella, baby. Wake up. Your phone has been ringing off of the hook," I said softly.

"Hmmm...let it go to voicemail," she mumbled.

"I would but they keep calling back," I reasoned.

## La Cantante

Bella pulled herself up from the bed, staying under the covers. She reached for her phone. She looked at the recent calls and checked the number. She shook her head and shrugged.

"If it's important, they'll leave a message. I'm going back to sleep," she said as she flopped down on the pillows. "I love your bed, Edward. It's so comfortable."

"I'm glad you approve of my mattress. I'm going to shower seeing as some asshole needed to call my girlfriend a million times and not leave a message. Care to join me?" I asked.

She popped her head up and put her finger to her lips. She rolled eyes skyward, pretending to be deep in thought. "More sleep in an insanely comfortable bed or ogle my fuckhot boyfriend in the shower? Decisions...decisions...shower."

"Really?" I asked excitedly. I pulled her up from the bed and threw her over my shoulder. She smacked my ass with her hands.

"Will you put me down? I have legs. I can walk, you know! You don't need to get all caveman on me," she giggled.

"You, Bella. Me, Edward. Mine," I grunted as I put her down in the bathroom.

"You, dork. Me, get girly smelly stuff," she said as she dashed out to grab her toiletry bag. As she got her bag, I started the shower. I was lucky to have this insane waterfall shower in my bathroom. It did wonders for knotty muscles. I pulled a couple of towels from the linen closet in my bathroom. I stripped off my boxers and stepped into the hot spray.

Bella came back into the bathroom and removed my shirt from her back and slipped off her panties. I could see through the glass enclosure that Bella was blushing. I reached from the shower and pulled into it. She giggled as she crashed into my chest.

"Edward, my shampoo and body gel is out there," she said.

## La Cantante

"I'm in here and I want you touch you, beautiful," I cooed. "You can use the stuff in here. Are you saying I smell?"

"No! Of course not. I just don't want to smell like boy," she wheedled. I turned my body and held out body gel and shampoo. It was some random stuff from Philosophy that my mom kept in my shower. Amazing Grace was the name of it.

"You will not smell like boy. My mom keeps random stuff in all of the bathrooms. I think you'll like this," I said as I reached for a washcloth. I put some of the pink gel into it and began lathering Bella's silky skin. I turned Bella so she was facing away from me. Her head fell back as I touched her body. I squirted some of the body gel into my hands and I ran them along her beautiful body. I began my exploration with her shoulders, slowly moving down her arms. I laced my fingers with hers and I leaned down to press a kiss to her neck. I released her fingers and continued moving my hands up her body. I gently massaged her breasts, rolling her nipples with my fingers. Her hips and ass swiveled against my erection that was caught between us. I moved my hands down the swell of belly to her hips. I groaned as my hands moved further south.

"Edward...please," she gasped.

"Please, what? What do you want, baby?" I asked, my voice sounding more gruff than usual.

"Touch me," she breathed.

*You don't need to ask me twice. I'm there!*

I snaked my hand down to her slick folds. She was so wet. So ready. I ran my fingers over her clit and she bucked her hips at my touch. I pulled my hand away and Bella looked over her shoulder with a look of confusion. I turned her and moved her to the built in bench in my shower. I gently nudged her down onto the seat.

## La Cantante

I knelt in front of her and looked into her eyes. "Do you trust me?"

She nodded, but there apprehension there. I leaned in and kissed her sweetly.

*Morning breath, be damned!*

I languidly pushed my tongue into her mouth and she readily accepted it. Her hands fisted my wet hair as she sat on the edge of the bench. "I want to taste you, Bella. I got a sampling last night and I'm wanting more. Please can I taste you?" I kissed her again. I pulled away and looked back into her eyes. She gave me a small nod and I kissed down her body. I licked at her left breast and gently massaged the right one with my hand. I then switched, nibbling along her rib cage. She moaned and squirmed.

"Oh, God. Edward,"

I smiled against her skin and kissed further down her body. I pushed her legs apart gently. I pressed a tender kiss to her inner thigh. I then bit down and sucked, marking her. She yelped. She looked down at me with a cute glare. I stared back at her with lust in my eyes. I kissed closer to her heated core. I could see her arousal glisten. I gave her one last glance and her head was thrown back, breathing erratically, causing her breasts to rise and fall erotically. I took that as a go. I leaned in and gave her clit long lick. My own mind began reeling at Bella's taste. She was sweet and perfect. I reached my hand and spread her with my fingers. I laved her clit with my tongue. I pulled it and sucked. Bella's hips bucked at the sensation. With my other hand, I gently pushed into her with one finger. She groaned and grabbed a fistful of my hair.

I pulled away and pressed an open mouthed kiss to her other thigh. "Do you like that, Bella?"

"Ungh! It feels so good, Edward," she croaked.

I burrowed my tongue into her entrance along with my finger. Bella's hips moving at a steady rhythm. I added a second finger and returned my attention to her clit. She was so tight and so wet. It was pouring down my hand. I

## La Cantante

maneuvered my hand and hit her G-spot. Her moans got louder. I could feel her muscles begin to clench around my fingers. I added a third and gently nibbled on clit. Her hips were rolling as I continued my ministrations. I heard Bella squeak and her muscles clamped down around my fingers. I continued to suck and nibble as she rode out her orgasm. I removed my fingers and greedily sucked them before kissing back up her gorgeous body. She was still breathing heavy when I reached her neck. She forcefully grabbed my face and plunged her tongue in my mouth. She could taste herself and that turned me on.

She slowly stood back up and pushed me against the wall of the shower.

*Feisty Bella is coming out to play. Nice.*

There was water flowing down between us. Her hair was black from it being wet. She placed kisses along my chest and stomach. Her hands moved down my torso, where she idly traced my tattoo. She continued to kiss further down my body. She nibbled and suckled along my tattoo. It felt amazing. I felt my eyes roll back in my head. She then reached my cock. She looked up at me with her insanely beautiful brown orbs and stared as she took the head into her mouth. She rolled her tongue over the tip.

"Do you like that, Edward? Do you like your cock in my mouth?" she asked confidently.

*Feisty Bella needs to play more often. She's fucking hot.*

"Shit, yeah I do. It feels so good," I groaned. I gently pushed her hair out her eyes as she took me in mouth again. She put me in her mouth as far as she could go. She used her hand to reach everywhere else. She pumped my dick with such ferocity; I was not going to last long. She nibbled along the shaft of my dick and I almost came right there. She then took me fully in her mouth and took all of my control to not thrust my hips. She pulled away and released the head with a pop.

"What do you want, Edward? Do you want to fuck my mouth?" she purred.

*Holy shit!*

I nodded and she took me her mouth again. I thrust my hips and she pumped her hand, massaging my balls. I could feel the coil in my stomach get tighter. I put my hand on her head, not wanting to guide her. She didn't need that. She ran her teeth along the bottom of my shaft and that was my undoing.

"Bella...I'm..."

I came as I was warning her. She swallowed my release and kept licking as I came down from my high. After she gracefully stood back up and daintily wiped her mouth. I cupped my hand around her face and gave her a searing kiss. I spun her so her back against the wall. I reached down to her thighs and picked her up. She instinctively wrapped her legs around my waist. I could feel myself get hard again. However, we needed to stop.

I pulled away, though Bella was still in my arms. Both of our breathing was ragged. "We should stop, baby. As much as I want to continue, I don't want our first time to be in my shower."

"Or a practice room," Bella giggled.

"Or a dorm room," I added. I gently lowered Bella back to the ground and we finished cleaning ourselves. We actually distanced ourselves as to not give into temptation. After our shower, I handed Bella a towel and then grabbed on for myself. She wrapped the towel around her body and I wrapped mine around my waist. I walked out of the bathroom to give Bella some privacy and I changed in my bedroom. I put on a pair of jeans, a long-sleeved white thermal tee-shirt and an Emerson t-shirt over the top. Bella emerged from the bathroom wearing the same thing. Her hair was still wet.

"Do you have a blow dryer or something?" she asked.

"I don't but I'm certain Alice does. Let me check her room." I unlocked my door and dashed to Alice's room. I went into her bathroom and rooted around in her cabinets. I found a blow dryer and I brought back to Bella. She was



## La Cantante

putting some gel in her hair as I was walking in. I handed her the blow dryer and I went back into my bedroom. I quickly made my bed and packed up my bag. Bella's phone was ringing from the bedside table. It was the same unknown number. I took her advice and let it go to voice mail. If it was important, they would leave a message.

Ten minutes later, Bella came out of the bathroom with her hair curled and some make up on. She looked beautiful, as always but there was something in her eyes.

"Bella, are you okay?" I asked tentatively.

"Um, yeah. Sure," she said.

"That's totally believable, Bella. What's wrong?" I said as I pulled her on the bed. She tossed her toiletry bag into her duffel and sat on my bed, Indian style.

"Please don't be mad," she muttered.

"Why would I be mad, beautiful?" I replied.

"Shit. How do I do this?" she mused.

*Is she breaking up with me? Fuck!*

"I guess the best way is to do it quickly," she continued.

*She is breaking up with me. God Damn It!*

"Edward, I'm a virgin."

*No, she can't be breaking up with me. Wait...what?*

"Excuse me? What did you say?" I squeaked.

"You're mad. Fuck."

## La Cantante

"Not mad, just need clarification. Please repeat that."

"I'm a virgin. Pure as the driven snow. Never had my cherry popped..."

"Okay, enough euphemisms. I get it," I breathed and pulled her into my lap. "I thought you were dumping my sorry ass."

"Edward, I don't think that would happen. I love you and that will never change. So, you're not mad?"

"Hell, no! I grateful that you waited and are willing to wait for me. I wish I waited to be with someone I truly loved when I lost my virginity. I just did it because I felt like I had something to prove."

"Can I ask you a question?" she asked quietly.

"Anything you want, baby."

"How many women have you been with?" she asked as she fumbled with her t-shirt.

"Two. However, the only that matters will be you. Like I said before, you will be the last woman I ever make love to. You will be the only woman I ever make love to. The other two were inconsequential."

"Was one of them Tanya?"

"Unfortunately, yes. We had a 'friends with benefits' type of arrangement. She eventually wanted more and I didn't. Until I met you. I'll admit that being with Tanya was a huge mistake. I will do everything in my power to make it up to you," I said sincerely. "I love you and only you."

"I love you, too," she sniffled. "Sorry for being an emotional mess. I just wanted to get that little tidbit of information out there. I never intended it for it turn into the 'sexual history' talk."

## La Cantante

"Well, I'll have you know that I was always careful. Wrapped it up every time. I'm too young to be a daddy. When we decide to make love, I can get the slew of tests to reassure you that I'm clean."

"Edward, that's not necessary. However, thank you for letting me know. I have another tidbit of information that I want to share with you. I'm on the shot. So, when we make love, you won't have to 'wrap it up.'"

My brows shot up to my hair line. "Hold on, if you're a virgin, why are you on the shot? Never mind...you don't need to tell me. That's too personal."

"Edward, we're talking about making love, past lovers and sexually transmitted diseases. This is not too personal. I have no shame in why I get the shot. I'm the worst pill-taker. Ever. I need to be on something regulate my female issues. I have a condition called Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome and being on birth control keeps the condition under control. I tried being on the pill and I couldn't remember to take it. I decided with my gynecologist to go on the shot. I get it every three months. I got it right before I came and I'll get it again at the clinic on campus. They already have my scrip."

"Oh. What does that mean, this poly...blah blah blah," I asked curiously.

"Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome or PCOS. It means I get a bunch of cysts on my ovaries and they cause me to have painful periods. It also indicates that there is a chemical imbalance of my blood sugar. If it become worse, I'll have to take diabetic medication. However, I'm lucky. I can manage with being on birth control."

"What will that mean for when you want to have children?"

"My doctor said it'll be more challenging, but not impossible. If things don't work, I'd have to see a fertility specialist. However, that's a long way off. Still a freshman in college...not ready for babies."

My reeled at what Bella just told me. However, I couldn't get the image of Bella, pregnant with our child out of my mind. Yes, I was still in college. Yes,

## La Cantante

I didn't know what I wanted to be when I grew up. Yes, I definitely knew that I was too young to be a father. I just couldn't shake the glorious image out of my head. Bella, her belly sticking out, pregnant with our child. A brown haired little girl with her mother's eyes. I could see it perfectly.

"Edward...EDWARD!"

I blinked myself back to reality and the present to see Bella snapping her fingers in front of me.

"Where were you? You were in lala land for a bit," she said.

"Imagining the future," I said with a crooked grin. I pulled her down and she snuggled on my chest. "I don't know why but when you mentioned children my mind raced ahead. I could see us in the future, you pregnant with our baby, a little girl. I don't know about you, baby, but I want that. I want that with you."

"We're still in college, Edward," she reasoned.

"I didn't say I wanted it now, beautiful. However, I do want it."

"A boy," Bella said quietly.

"What?"

"I want a little bronze haired boy with your beautiful eyes," she said as she leaned on her hands on my chest.

"I was thinking that we would have a baby girl with brown hair and eyes like her mother."

"Wow. This conversation was not what I intended it to be, but I like it. I should be freaking out, but I'm not. I want it too, Edward. I want it very much."

"We'll get it, beautiful," I responded. As we lay there, enjoying our varying versions of the future, our noses were assaulted by the scent of bacon and

pancakes. My stomach snarled as did Bella's and we decided to head down to get breakfast.

xx LC xx

We headed back to Emerson after we ate a huge breakfast of blueberry pancakes, bacon and eggs. I'm surprised that I'm not 400 pounds with the way my mother cooks. As Bella was packing up her duffle bag, my mom pulled me aside and asked me if I was happy. I said yes. She pressed further, gazing into my eyes. I couldn't lie to her. I said no. I was incredibly happy with Bella but I hated the classes I was taking. I hated the direction my life was going. I didn't want to be stuck in a job that I would hate and resent just to make my father proud. Esme's eyes teared up. She said that she would work on Carlisle. She knew my love of music and how it brought me closer to my birth mother. She hated that the "sparkle" in my eye disappeared when I spoke about my pre-med courses. She hated how I became detached and resolute. She missed her sweet boy. I gave her a huge hug and I felt the tears pool in my eyes. Esme was always my biggest supporter. With her on my side, Carlisle would surely relent to my wishes. Hopefully.

Bella was fumbling with my IPod, trying to find the "perfect driving song." I chuckled at her enthusiasm. She looked for about fifteen minutes and then got frustrated and set it to shuffle. We stopped about halfway back to campus so I could fill up the gas tank. Bella went to the bathroom. As she was in the bathroom, her phone rang from the center console. It was the same unlisted number. I'd had enough and I picked up.

"Hello?" I barked. "Is anybody there?"

I could hear breathing on the other end, but no response.

"Hello? If you're not going to talk, then stop calling," I snapped as I ended the call. I put the phone back in the console and finished filling up gas tank. Bella came back from the bathroom and she had a pack of gum and two coffees. She slid into the car and put the coffees into the cup holders and put the gum into her messenger bag. I finished the gas sale and turned over the car. I pulled out

into traffic and headed back to the highway.

"Bella, while you were in the bathroom your phone rang. It was that same unlisted number. I picked up."

"Who was it? Was it a wrong number?" she asked.

"I don't know. They didn't answer when I picked up the phone. I know someone was there. I could hear them breathing, but they wouldn't talk. I snapped at them to stop calling your number," I said quietly.

"Hopefully they'll listen. Thanks," she murmured. She handed me my coffee and I took a sip. Bella reached down into her bag and grabbed her history book and read for the rest of the ride back to Emerson. When we returned to campus, I drove us directly to Brandon Hall. We needed to meet with Tyler and Tia before we sang the National Anthem for the football game. I parked on the street. Bella grabbed her phone and stuck it in her pocket. We headed into the music building and met in one of the small ensemble rooms. When we walked in, Tyler was standing in front of the piano and Tia was sitting in a chair. By her feet were a pair of crutches. She had a huge brace around her right knee.

"Hey Tyler. Tia, what happened?" I asked.

"I was drunk on Thursday after Express rehearsal. One of my roommates turned 21 and we were celebrating in our room. Anyway, I got totally lit. We ordered pizza. I was the most sober out of all of us and I was sent down to get the pizza. I tripped over some guy's shoe on the stairs and took a tumble. My leg went one way and my body went the other. I tore my ACL, MCL and meniscus. My knee is fucked to high heaven. I called Felix yesterday morning and he was pissed. He is not happy losing one of his strongest dancers. He told me I needed to find a replacement for my spot in Express. I thought of a few people, but no one can dance. Do you know anyone?"

"Rosalie. She told me that she was on her dance team in high school. Maybe she'd be willing to do it," Bella suggested.

## La Cantante

"No harm in asking," I agreed. Bella whipped out her phone and dialed up Rosalie.

"Hey Rose!

Do you have a class on Thursday nights?" Bella asked hopefully.

I heard her muffled response. Bella's eyes lit up. "You don't. That's great. How would like to join me and Edward in dancing our asses off in Emerson Express? You know you loved those awesome dresses."

Bella began bouncing on her toes and she nodded at Tia. She smiled at Bella. Tia motioned for her put Rose on hold. "Can you ask her to come sing today? I'm not supposed to be on my feet and if she's willing, I'll be forever indebted to her," Tia begged as soon as Bella put her on mute.

She unmuted the phone, "One more thing, can you sing the National Anthem today? Tia, the alto section leader, the girl whose spot you're taking in Express, jacked up her knee pretty royally. She should not be walking in any shape or form... Great! See you in a little bit. Wear jeans and a white long-sleeved t-shirt. We'll get you a t-shirt to wear with us. See you in a little bit."

Bella ended the call and looked pointedly at Tia. "Go home. Rest, ice, compression and elevate. Give me your phone," Bella commanded. Tia took out her cell phone and handed it to her. Bella programmed her number into Tia's phone and then dialed it. Her phone shrilled in her hand. She ended the call and passed the phone back to Tia. "Call me if you need anything, Tia. Edward, can you drive back to her dorm?"

"Sure. Come on, Tia," I said surprisingly.

*Feisty Bella is back with a vengeance and not taking any prisoners. She has a bit of Alice in her. Damn.*

Tia followed me to the stairs. I looked at her and her crutches and did the gallant thing. I tossed the crutches down the stairs and picked Tia up. She gave

## La Cantante

me an annoyed stare as we walked down the stairs. I gingerly put her down and picked up her crutches. We moved slowly to my car. We passed Rosalie on our way out. Tia handed Rose her shirt as they passed and I quickly dropped Tia off at her dorm. She lived in the dorm attached to Rathburn. I helped her to her room and I dashed back to Brandon. When I came back, I could hear Bella, Rose and Tyler singing the Star Spangle Banner. They sounded good. I strode into the small ensemble room and Bella handed me my music. We ran through it several times before we had to head out to the football stadium. Tyler and I explained to the girls that we each would have our own cordless microphones. It was decided that Bella and I would be in the middle and Rose and Tyler would be on the outside. We alternated boy-girl. We all piled into my car and drove down to the football stadium.

When we got down there, it was mass hysteria. There thousands of people in the stands. The marching band was on the track surrounding the field. I quickly parked the car and we headed toward the entrance of the field. Emmett, who was one of the athletic trainers for the team, was going to meet us at the north entrance. We got there and we saw him waiting for us. He was in a pair of gray khakis and a navy blue athletic trainer polo shirt. He opened the gate and let us through. He led us to the sound booth where we got our microphones. I reached into my pockets and pulled out four sets of earplugs. Tyler grabbed a pair but Bella and Rose looked at them skeptically."

"It'll help with the echo that we're bound to hear," I explained. Bella and Rose both took the earplugs and put them in. Both football teams were out on the field. The head coach found Emmett and gave him a curt nod. He then tugged on my sleeve and it was our time to go. Tyler, Bella, Rose and I strode out to the center of the football field. It was never discussed, however Bella took the initiative to say "Will you all please rise for the singing of the National Anthem?"

She very clearly gave us our tonic note and we found the notes in the opening chord. Bella brought up her microphone and we did the same. She gave us a pulse with her body and cued us in. As we began singing, the crowd was screaming loudly. While we continued, the crowd grew quiet and you could hear a pin drop. Bella led us wonderfully, giving us our cues with a subtle nod



## La Cantante

of the head or flick of the wrist. As we finished the Star Spangled Banner, the crowd erupted in raucous cheers and whoops. We gave a small bow and exited the field. We removed our earplugs and gave our microphones to the sound guys. We stayed on the field as the first quarter of the game began.

Rosalie squealed and grabbed Bella's hands. She had never seen Bella "in action" and we can safely assume that Rose was impressed. "Holy fucking shit, Swan," she bellowed.

"Christ, Rose! Swear much?" Bella laughed.

"Who are you and what have you done with my shy, timid roommate?" Rose teased.

I walked behind Bella and wrapped my arms around her waist and laid my chin on her shoulder. Bella blushed and nestled herself in my arms. Rose laughed. "There she is. You are a different woman on stage, Bella. It's like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, only you're not crazy."

"I know what I'm good at, Rose."

"You fucking rocked, Bella," Tyler said as he held out a fist. Bella gave him a fist bump and rolled her eyes.

I leaned in to whisper in her ear, "*L'amo il mio bel cantante. Lei è la mia vita. Lei sarà sempre la mia vita.*"

"What does that mean, Edward?" she asked quietly.

"It means, 'I love you my beautiful singer. You are my life. You will always be my life.' I mean it, sincerely," I murmured against her lips as I kissed her.

"Can you speak Italian to me for the rest of my life?" she asked.

"*Farò che lei vuole, il mio bell'angelo. L'amo con tutto il mio cuore,*" I breathed.

## La Cantante

"Yeah, what you said," she replied. She fisted my hair into small hands and pulled me into a passionate embrace. The thousands of people in the stands disappeared and all that was left was Bella and I. Together, we could do anything, conquer anything and be anything. One thing I knew for sure, Bella was my future and I was not going to let her go. Ever.

### **Translations:**

*Farò che lei vuole, il mio bell'angelo. L'amo con tutto il mio cuore - I'll do whatever you want, my beautiful angel. I'll love you with all of my heart.*

# Lingerie Fairies and Other Fun

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 20: Lingerie Fairies and Other Fun

### BPOV

Edward, Tyler, Rose and I stayed and watched the first half of the football game. At halftime, we all piled into Edward's Volvo and he drove us back to the dorms. He dropped off Tyler first. Tyler lived in an apartment off campus, but still within walking distance. We headed back to Patterson after we dropped him off. Edward parked his car and gathered our bags. We headed up to our rooms. Edward dropped off my bag and gave me a chaste kiss at the door. I watched him as he strode down the hall to the stairs. I heaved a sigh and I could hear Rose chuckling.

"What, Hale? Why are you laughing at me?" I teased.

"You got it soooooo bad, Bella," she retorted. "You are one lucky bitch."

"I know, I am. Aren't I?" I asked with a twinkle in my eye. I grabbed my bag and emptied my clothes into my laundry basket. I also pulled the clothes from the hamper. I desperately needed to laundry. I grabbed my detergent, my laundry card and baskets of dirty clothes and headed to the basement. I divided my clothes and put them into the washing machines. I swiped my laundry card and filled the machines with detergent.

After I completed my oh-so-glamorous task of laundry, I sat down on one of the chairs in the laundry room. My mind was racing. I was a very lucky bitch. I had two amazing roommates. I'd heard nightmarish stories of roommates from

## La Cantante

hell. Girls who would backstab and steal your boyfriend; inconsiderate, snobby bitches who only worried about themselves; and the girls who would never shower. Alice was pushy as hell, but had a heart of gold. Rosalie was tough as nails, but was a loyal friend. We all got along so well. Our personalities were alike in many ways, but different enough to even each other out.

I then turned my musings to Edward. How did I get so lucky? What have I done to deserve this wonderful, kind-hearted, generous, gorgeous man? Someone up there must like me. He's everything that a girl could wish for in a boyfriend. He was thoughtful, he was insanely beautiful, he was wickedly talented and he loved me. I closed my eyes and imagined Edward in my head. His pale skin that flushed pink when he got embarrassed. His bronze locks that stuck up every which way. His emerald green eyes that twinkled when he was happy, the turned more hazel when he was sad and were black when he was turned on. His chiseled features and strong jaw. His full, pouty lips that were so soft. His long, graceful fingers that played my body better than any instrument. His lean, muscled chest. His tattoo...Christ, his tattoo. I was never a fan of ink before. My feelings have changed on the topic substantially. Edward's tattoo was large, but not like a typical tattoo. It flowed the curve of his hip and his body. It almost appeared that it was meant for his skin.

I opened my eyes and I needed to calm my breathing. Just imagining my boyfriend was turning me on. I fanned my face. I switched over my laundry and headed back upstairs. My cheeks were still flushed when I entered my room. Rose gave me a smirk from her bed. She was painting her toenails. I ambled over to my bed and lay down. I closed my eyes again and pictured Edward. I smiled at my vision and enjoyed a quick catnap.

*You are a lucky bitch, Swan.*

xx LC xx

Edward and I went out to a movie with Alice and Jasper. We saw some Civil War epic that Jasper was raving about. Alice loved it because Jasper did. Edward and I hated it. We said that for the next movie, Edward and I would get to choose. As we drove the restaurant after the movie, we decided to watch a

## La Cantante

scary movie for the next film, as Alice hated them. She smacked Edward from the backseat of the car and gave me the death stare.

After we got some dinner at a local pub, McFinnigans. It was some good grease. We headed back to Patterson after dinner. Jasper and Edward hung out in our room for a bit. Jasper was laying on Alice's bed with his head in her lap. I was sitting on the floor and Edward was massaging my shoulders.

*Seriously, can he just follow me around and massage my shoulders for the rest of my life? Magical fingers. Perhaps one hand can massage the shoulders and the other...Get. Mind. Out. Of. The. Gutter!*

We were just chilling out when Jasper piped up, "So, when's our next gig for Breaking Midnight, Eddie-boy?"

Edward stopped rubbing my shoulders and huffed. "Seriously, Jasper? Eddie-boy?"

"What? The name never did anything to you," Jasper reasoned.

"Yeah, okay, Jazzy," Edward retorted.

"Fuck you, man. I hate 'Jazzy,'" Jasper snorted.

"Probably as much as I hate 'Eddie-boy,'" Edward reasoned.

"Fair point well made, Cullen. Back to my question. When's our next gig for Breaking Midnight?"

I felt Edward shift behind me. He pulled out his phone and checked the calendar. "Homecoming Weekend at the Chapel. We probably need to rehearse. Are you free tomorrow night?"

"Yep," Jasper replied.

## La Cantante

"How about you, Bella? Are you available tomorrow night?" Edward asked as he kissed the top of my head.

"Pretty sure," I said as I leaned back and looked at him. He's so pretty when he's upside down. "Kiss."

He chuckled and gave me an upside down kiss. "Hmmm." He gave me another one and gently kissed my nose. He gently tapped my back and I scooted forward. He reached down and I grabbed his hand. He lifted me up and pointed to the bed. I plopped down with an eye roll and he took my spot on the floor. He grasped my hands and placed them on his shoulders.

"Are you asking for a shoulder massage, Edward?" I teased.

"I've only been rubbing yours for an hour. Turnabout's fair play," he said as he shimmied his shoulders under my hands. I giggled and began rubbing.

"An hour? Please. More like fifteen minutes you goober," I said as I ruffled his hair. He shot me an adorable little glare and scrunched his nose.

"Whatever, Swan. Keep rubbing," he said as he leaned back to my legs. While I was massaging, Edward dialed his phone.

"Hey Emmett! Are you available tomorrow night to rehearse for Breaking Midnight?" Edward asked into his phone. I heard Emmett's booming response as he was.

"Inside voice, Em," Edward teased as he pulled the phone away from his ear. "I think I'm deaf in my left ear because of your yelling. Christ! How about we meet at Brandon in the large ensemble room in the basement at 4? Cool! Good game today, by the way. How is massaging those athletes?"

Edward pulled the phone away and I heard Emmett curse a blue streak. "That good, huh, Em?" Another string of profanities. "Uh, I'll talk to you later. Have fun."

## La Cantante

Edward clicked off his phone and put it back in his pocket. I began scratching his back but I couldn't get a good angle from where he was sitting. I gently tugged on his hair. He turned to look at me with his eyebrow raised. I nodded to the bed. He scrambled to stand up and lay down on the bed on stomach.

"That's not what I meant, Edward," I grumbled.

"Too bad. I'm comfy now," he said into the bedspread, muffling his voice. I swatted his ass and he gave me a pointed glare. "Evil woman."

"No, that would be Alice," I teased.

"Hey now! I'm not evil, just bossy," she responded.

"Ain't that the truth," Edward and I both muttered. We shared an amused look. Edward sat up and sat cross legged on my bed.

*Now, we're thinking alike. That's just scary.*

"Okay, as much as I love hanging out with both of you, I would like some time to spend with my roommate, Bella. So, I'm kicking you two out," Alice bossed.

"Alice," Edward and I whined. "Stop that!" we continued.

"This is why. You two are sounding the same. Pretty soon Bella, you're hair will be sticking up all over the place and Edward, you're going grow a vagina. Go do some male bonding with Jasper and Emmett."

Edward gaped at his sister. He then threw me the most pitiful look ever. He wrapped his arms around my body and tugged me close to him. "Save me from the evil pixie."

"Only if you take me with you," I replied.

Alice stomped over to my bed and pinched Edward in the ass. He yelped as he grabbed his butt and Alice got a strangle hold on his ear. She dragged him up

## La Cantante

off of the bed and walked him to the door. The look on his face was extreme pain.

"Fucking-a, Alice! That hurt! You're freakishly strong for a midget," he complained as he rubbed his ear with one hand and his ass with the other. Alice gave Jasper a pointed glare and he relented easily.

"Remind me to never get on your bad side, sugar," Jasper drawled. He leaned down and gave Alice a brief kiss. Edward went to walk to give me a kiss and Alice, still in her embrace with Jasper, stuck her hand out and poked Edward in the chest.

She pulled away from Jasper and began pushing him out the door. "Oh, come on! You and Jasper got to say goodbye. It's only fair," Edward wheedled.

Alice glared at her brother and raised her eyebrow. She stepped aside and gestured for Edward to proceed. "I never knew I needed permission to kiss my girlfriend," he mumbled.

Edward walked over to me at the bed. I was giggling at their interaction. He pulled me up and shot Alice a murderous look before cradling my face with his hands. He leaned in and caressed my lips with his. He angled my face to deepen the kiss. His tongue entered my mouth and my hands moved around his waist. One of his hands moved from my face and snaked around my waist and rested on top of my ass. I vaguely remember hearing movement. Edward pulled away suddenly.

"Motherfucker, Alice! Stop pinching my ass! That fucking hurts!" he yelled.

I leaned into his ear, "Do you want me to massage that, baby?" I purred.

He turned to look back at me and his eyes were ablaze. "More than you can imagine. There are other things you can massage, too," he whispered against my lips. "However, if I don't leave, I'm going to be bruised beyond all recognition."



## La Cantante

"I love you, Eddie-boy," I teased.

"Bella," he growled.

"Just kidding, baby. Seriously, I do love you, very much," I responded.

"I love you more, beautiful."

Edward reluctantly pulled away and began walking to the door. He ruffled Alice's hair as he left. She flipped him off. Edward did the same in response. Jasper chuckled and pushed him out the door.

"Good night, ladies. See you tomorrow, Bella."

"Bye, Jasper."

As soon as Alice closed the door, she launched herself onto my bed. She started bouncing excitedly, her blue eyes twinkling.

"So, something happened this weekend with Edward. What happened? Tell me!" she squealed.

"Can we wait for Rose? She's at the library and I don't want to tell it twice," I pleaded.

"Oh, fine. However, first thing tomorrow morning, you are so spilling the beans. Something changed between you and Edward. It's really good and I want to know what it is."

*Can I just hit fast forward? Nosy little sprite.*

xx LC xx

Rosalie came back to the dorm well after 1 in the morning. Both Alice and I were asleep. I got up at nine and hopped into the shower. Rosalie was still asleep and Alice was typing on her computer. When I got up, she gave me a

## La Cantante

hopeful look and I just shook my head and pointed to Rose's sleeping form. Alice pouted and I went into the shower.

When I got out of the shower, Rosalie had awoken from her slumber. She turned to look at me and Alice pounced onto her bed.

"Jeez! Can I get dressed first?" I said as I stood in my robe.

"No!" they responded in unison.

"Too bad, you have to wait. I don't want 'spill the beans' in my robe. Good Lord!" I went to my dresser and pulled out some underwear and slipped in on under my robe. I pulled up a pair of track pants as well. I turned away from the girls and slipped on a bra and a t-shirt. I grabbed my brush and worked on the tangles as I told Alice and Rose what happened this weekend.

"So," I began, "I met with Garrett from your old high school. I have to some hours of observation for my education class. Edward emailed him and asked if I could do them there. Edward drove me to the high school on Friday. That's why I wasn't at University Singers. I was in the car. Anyway, I'm meeting with him every Friday for the next few weeks to complete my hours. Afterward, we went to your parents' house. Esme was there. She is so nice and sweet. So unlike my own mother. We chatted for an hour or so over some snacks. She pushed us out of the kitchen and Edward showed me the rest of the house. The last room he showed me was his own room. He then proceeded to show his music room. He pointed to the wall and told me that the mural on it was his tattoo."

"Edward has a tattoo?" Rose gasped. "He so doesn't seem the type."

"Yeah, he does. It's on his right hip. It's amazing and gorgeous. It is a piano keyboard with different musical symbols surrounding it. Anyhow, he said at the time he got the tattoo, music was his greatest love. That's changed now. He said that I was his greatest love," I murmured.

The girls swooned and grasped hands.

*So typical. Jeez.*

"Wait, there's more. He sat down at the upright piano in his music room and played the most beautiful lullaby I've ever heard. I was bawling my eyes out when he was done, it was so gorgeous. He said that he wrote it for me. It was his musical representation of how he felt. Then, I jumped him, kind of."

Rose guffawed and Alice sniffled. They both smiled at me to continue.

"After a heated little make out session in the music room, I changed out of my suit and went downstairs. I helped out Esme with dinner until your dad came home. Edward got all protective of me when Carlisle flirted with me. It was interesting, to say the least. I finished helping Esme with dinner and we sat down. It was a bit tense. Carlisle and Esme asked about my major and that was fine. However, when Carlisle asked Edward about his major and classes, Edward bristled up. Esme mentioned that Carlisle does not approve of Edward's love of music. How long has that been going on, Alice?"

"Oh, jeez. Ever since Edward was a junior in high school. You know how much Edward loves to perform. He mentioned it to me that it keeps him close to his birth mom. Carlisle is very logical, technical and doesn't understand that. Edward tried up until he came here. He declared his major as pre-med and you could tell he was suffering. However, I have a feeling that Daddy C will relent. Edward will be a music major before the end of the school year. I can bet on it," Alice said confidently.

"I have no doubt. I'll never bet against you, Alice," I sniggered.

"So, what else happened, Bella?" Rosalie asked.

"After dinner, Edward took me this gorgeous field behind the house. We sat there for about an hour and half, just talking and trying to brainstorm how to get Carlisle to bend on the whole music thing. Afterward, we headed back to the house and we went up to Edward's room. We had every intention of watching a movie, but didn't. Let's just say we were both very satisfied before we went to sleep," I said with a timid smile.

## La Cantante

"What did you guys do?" Alice squealed.

"I'm so not going to kiss and tell. Besides, isn't that weird asking about your brother's sex life?" I mused.

"YOU. HAD. SEX?" Alice screeched.

"Hell, no! I'm still a virgin. Stop screaming, Ali," I said as I wiggled my ear.

"Oh, okay," she said quietly.

"Am I done now?" I asked.

"Are you going to spill specific details as to what you guys did?" Alice asked.

"Uh, no. There are some things that should be left private, Alice."

"Ugh, fine. However, we now have a reason to go back to the mall," Alice said bouncing on the bed.

"Whatever for, sprite?" Rose asked.

"To get Bella sexy lingerie for Edward. Come on, get dressed and we'll head to the mall and hit up Victoria's Secret and La Perla," Alice said as she raced to her closet.

Rosalie beamed at me and went to her dresser and pulled out some things and ran to the bathroom. I heard the shower start and I grumbled.

"Come on, Bella! Chop! Chop! Get dressed!" Alice squealed.

"I am dressed, pixie," I grumbled.

"No, you're not. Put on pants with buttons and shirt with some sort of shape. Have you learned nothing in the three weeks you've lived with me?"

## La Cantante

"Apparently not," I muttered. I dug out a pair of jeans, white tank top and Edward's jacket from my closet. I quickly put them on. Rose had exited from the bathroom with her hair pulled back, wearing a bra and jeans. She went to her closet and pulled out a blouse and slipped it over her shoulders. Alice had put on a pair of grey skinny jeans and a black shirt that hung off her shoulder.

Rose grabbed her car keys from her desk and proclaimed that she was driving.

*At least we won't die on our way to the mall, thank the lord.*

xx LC xx

Six hours later, I now had a lingerie wardrobe. Courtesy of Alice, the lingerie fairy. I had at least five bags of bras, panties, thongs, nighties and several things called bustiers. I tried to rein her in but it wasn't happening. I begged Rose for her help, but she was enjoying this as much as Alice. I was their very own Bella Barbie Doll, complete with crotchless panties.

*Why did I agree to buy those? Fuck my life.*

We got back to campus in time for a quick dinner before I had rehearsal with Breaking Midnight. We ate in the cafeteria. As we were eating our ice cream, Rose got really quiet and she started blushing.

"Rose, you like something is bothering you. What's up?" Alice asked.

"Okay, so last night I went to the library. I had to work on a paper and I needed to research. While I was there, I ran into Emmett. He was also working on a paper. We got to talking and we went for coffee last night," Rose admitted quietly.

"Oh my God, Rose! That's awesome!" Alice screeched.

"Ali, stop screeching. I don't think China heard you," I chided. "So, did he behave himself?"

## La Cantante

"Yeah. It was weird. He was a perfect gentleman. He actually confessed that he liked me. A lot."

"So, what's going to happen?" Alice asked.

"Right now, not much. I'm still getting used to having guys as acquaintances. I told him that if we pursue this, we would have to take it very slowly. However, I can only offer him friendship. We'll see what the future holds," Rose said.

"Does he know what happened?" I asked.

"Kind of. I told him that I was sexually assaulted, but didn't get into many details. He was very understanding, though he wanted to kill Royce. Not that I blame him."

"Emmett's a good man. Bit of a goofball, has no filter and minor issues with bodily functions..." I teased. I glanced down at my watch. "I gotta go. I'm meeting the guys at their room in ten minutes and I need to pick up a few things from the room. I'll see you guys tonight. Thank you for a fun day and for the copious amounts of see-through lace and satin."

"You're welcome, Bella. Have fun at rehearsal," Alice sang.

I grabbed my tray and skipped to the exit of the cafeteria. As I was walking back to Patterson, my phone rang from my pocket. Damn unknown caller. I picked up.

"Hello?" I asked tentatively.

I heard nothing but ragged breathing.

"Seriously? You call me just to breathe in my ear? Lose this fucking number, asshole," I snapped and ended the call. I grumbled as I continued my way back to the dorm. I raced up the stairs to grab my keyboard. I may as well contribute beside my voice. I also grabbed the list of songs that I made when Edward first asked me to join. I heard a knock on the door and dashed to open it. Outside,

## La Cantante

Jasper was standing with his bass over his shoulder.

"Edward and Emmett are loading up the truck. They asked me to get you. Do you need anything?" he asked politely.

I nodded and motioned to the keyboard on my bed. I grabbed my iPod, phone, and list of songs and crammed them into my messenger bag. Jasper picked up the keyboard and we headed out to the parking lot. Emmett was in the bed of his old beat up truck. He was fussing a huge drum set. Edward was passing him different parts of a tarp, covering the set. He was wearing a pair of track pants, gray hoodie and a hat over his hair.

"Hey, we got one more thing to put in the truck," Jasper called. He held up my keyboard and Edward took it from him. He placed it along the back of the truck, with a blanket around it. After he secured my keyboard, he walked up me and enveloped me in a warm hug. He pulled back and gave me a chaste kiss on the lips. The bill of his hat nearly poked my eyes out. I took the hat off his head and flipped so it was backwards. I gave him a deeper, more passionate kiss before releasing him.

"I missed you today, beautiful. I went down to see if you wanted breakfast at 11 and no one was home," he said as he rubbed my back.

"Alice had a shopping attack," I explained. "I was held hostage in a mall for six hours. SIX HOURS! However, you will definitely enjoy the fruits of our labor."

"Really?" he asked. His entire face lit up. "What did you get?"

"You'll see," I replied cryptically. He pouted and I ran my thumb over his bottom lip. I leaned in and used his words on him, "I want to bite that lip."

His eyes widened and became dark. I leaned in and kissed him, nibbling on his bottom lip. I pulled away. "Tease."

"You love me."

## La Cantante

"With my whole heart, baby," he replied.

"You two are nauseating," Emmett said as he made a gagging noise.

I flipped him the bird, as did Edward. I elbowed him in the ribs and we walked to his car. I slipped into the passenger seat and Edward got into the driver's seat. Jasper and Emmett rode together in the truck. We drove to Brandon Hall and Emmett parked in the alleyway next to the building. Edward parked on the street. Edward, Jasper and Emmett began unloading all of their gear out of the truck bed. After they unloaded the gear, Emmett pulled the truck behind Edward's car and they began hauling it into a freight elevator. We got all of the gear loaded up and we walked down a short hallway to a medium sized room. Emmett began assembling his drum set and Jasper and Edward began setting up the sound system. I took my keyboard and set it up on a stand and plugged it into an amplifier. It took us about fifteen minutes to set up for our rehearsal.

Edward went into his bag and pulled out a packet of papers and handed it to each of us. We were all sitting on the floor, in front of the band set-up. I quickly flipped through and saw it was the current set list for Breaking Midnight.

"Okay, so in front of you is what we play already," Edward explained. "I made a list of songs I'd like to add, especially with Bella joining us." He passed out a single sheet of paper with a list of twenty songs. "Bella, do you have any that you like add?"

I got up and went into my bag and grabbed my list. I did a quick scan of my list and the new list that Edward compiled and they were very similar. We only had a few songs that were different, but other than that, they were identical.

"There's a few that I have on my list that you don't. Can we add those?" I asked.

"Sure, let's hear 'em," Edward said as he pulled a pencil out his bag.



## La Cantante

I scanned my list and rattled off the songs that were not on there, "'Decode,' by Paramore, 'Crazy' by Alanis Morissette, 'Fade Into You,' by Mazzy Star, 'I Kissed a Girl,' by Katy Perry, 'Bring Me To Life,' by Evanescence, and 'Mother, Mother,' by Tracy Bonham."

"Those are all great songs. There are a few that may pose a challenge. 'Decode,' for example. It has two guitar parts. We only have one guitarist," Edward explained as he furrowed his brows.

"What did I say to your parents on Friday?" I countered.

Edward thought back to the dinner. When he realized, his face broke into a huge grin. "I forgot. You know how to play the guitar. So, we now have two guitarists. Sweet."

Emmett and Jasper looked at each other and smiled. "We should probably figure out what songs to play for the party Homecoming weekend," Emmett offered.

"We first need to figure out where we can add Bella in our existing set and add the new pieces," Edward explained.

The guys nodded their assent and we got to work on where to add me into their existing pieces. I would be singing back up, playing keyboard or back up guitar. We then decided to add ten songs where I would be singing lead or duet with Edward. We decided to keep 'Broken' in our standard set list as well. After our discussion of songs, we began our actual rehearsal. The guys knew their songs pretty well, and they only had guitar chords for music. I followed as best as I could on the keyboard. We then began to add the new pieces that Edward or I mentioned. We rehearsed for about five hours. It was about 9:30 by the time we wrapped up and had the truck loaded.

I was exhausted, both mentally, physically and vocally. I pushed myself, vocally, during this rehearsal. I knew I had to take it easy. I didn't want to cause damage to my voice by pushing it. I was tired physically because of all of the lifting. The guys were great in making sure that I didn't move too many

## La Cantante

things, but I felt guilty just standing there. I did more work than I should have. I was finally mentally taxed. Not having actual music was a challenge. I had to make up chords on the fly and it was not easy. I got into the Edward's car and leaned my head against the headrest. I could have fallen asleep right there. I heard Edward talking to Emmett and Jasper. About a minute later, he slid into the driver's seat. I gave him a sleepy smile.

"So, what did you think, beautiful?" he asked as he kissed my hand.

"I'm exhausted. My brain is hurting from all of the thinking, my body is hurting for all of the lifting, and my voice is hurting from pushing myself. I don't know how you do it," I said.

"Is it too much, baby? You don't have to join. I don't want to push you," he replied frantically.

"No! I enjoyed it, immensely but I need to get used to it. I do want to call my dad to see if he can ship my acoustic and electric guitars to me. I don't want to rely on using yours during performances," I said quietly.

"Okay. Let's head back to Patterson. Emmett and Jasper are going to a storage locker that we have rented to store the equipment. They're also getting some dinner. They said wouldn't be back for a couple of hours," he said with a suggestive wiggle of his brows.

"Sounds good," I said as I pulled out my phone. "I'm just going to quickly call my dad."

I dialed my father's number and waited for him to pick up. "Swan."

"Hey Dad."

"Hey, Bella! How are you doing, baby girl?" he asked.

"I'm good. Tired, but good."

## La Cantante

"To what do I owe the pleasure of a phone call from my favorite daughter?" he chuckled.

"I'm your only daughter, Charlie. Unless you have some secret love child. If you do, I don't want to know about it," I shuddered. "Anyhow, can you do me a favor? Can you ship my guitars to me at Emerson?"

"Sure thing, Bells. I'll have them shipped out tomorrow. What do you need them for?"

"I joined an on-campus band and I don't want to rely on the other musicians for guitars. Might as well use what I'm used to," I explained.

"Sounds good. Love you, baby girl."

"Love you too, Dad."

"Oh, Billy says hi, by the way," Charlie said before we hung up. He seemed hesitant to say so.

"Really? I figured with all that happened with Jacob, you two wouldn't have remained friends," I replied. Billy Black was my father's best friend and Jacob's father. I knew that they had a falling out after Jacob was arrested. I hadn't known that they had reconciled.

"Uh, yeah. I ran into him at The Lodge. Jake was with him. We're still not 'okay,' but it's getting better."

"When did you see him, Dad?" I asked.

"Friday evening. Why?" Charlie replied.

"Just curious. I gotta go. I'm heading up to my dorm room and then heading to bed. I'm worn out. Good night, Charlie," I said with a yawn.

## La Cantante

"Good night, baby girl. Stay safe," he replied. I ended the call and looked at Edward.

*Even a bit scruffy, hat on his head, wearing workout clothes, he was so pretty.*

We were almost to Patterson. He pulled into a parking spot and we got out of the car. We walked, hand in hand, up to his room. He flipped on a lamp by the door, put his bag by his desk and dragged me to his bed. He took off his hat as we lay down and snuggled on the bed. I was still wearing my jacket, well Edward's jacket, and I sat up and shrugged out of it. Edward held his arms open and I nestled into them.

"I love you so much, beautiful. You know that, don't you?" he asked quietly.

"I love you too," I said as I looked up at his face. His eyes were at half mast.

"You're exhausted and so am I, I'm just going to head downstairs."

I tried to wriggle out his grasp, but he held on with all of his strength. "Nope. I didn't get to see you all day. I want to cuddle with you, even if it's for a short while."

I relented and snuggled back to his chest. Edward pressed a kiss to my forehead and laced my fingers with his. I felt my eyes get heavy and they closed. I vaguely heard the door open and a blanket being placed over us. I burrowed deeper into Edward's chest. Before I fell into a deeper sleep, I heard Edward whisper "You may not know it, Isabella, but you are my life now. I love you."

**A/N: Breaking Midnight Set List:**

**Girl's Not Grey - AFI**

**Criminal - Fiona Apple**

**Drive - Incubus**

**Flood - Jars of Clay**

**Bring Me To Life - Evanescence**

**Land of Confusion - Disturbed**

**Crazy - Alanis Morissette**

**Broken - Seether**

**The Pretender - Foo Fighters**

**Mother, Mother - Tracy Bonham**

**Carry On My Wayward Son - Kansas**

**Decode - Paramore**

**Wanted, Dead or Alive - Bon Jovi**

**Serenity - Godsmack**

**I Kissed A Girl - Katy Perry**

**This Is How the Heart Breaks - Rob Thomas**

# Mind Blowing Perfect Pitch

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*Special thanks to I Loves Emmett Cullen for her words of encouragement!*

## Chapter 21: Mind Blowing Perfect Pitch

### EPOV

*"You may not know it, Isabella, but you are my life now. I love you."*

I felt Bella nestle closer in my arms after my admission. I truly meant my words. She was my life, my reason for breathing, the sole purpose of my existence. I smiled at these thoughts, though they should scare the ever-living-shit out of me. I just couldn't imagine a life without Bella.

I fell into a deep sleep after my confession. When my alarm went off in the morning, I was thoroughly confused. I looked down and saw that Bella was facing away from me, curled into my side. I was wrapped around her, spooning her tiny body. We were wrapped up in a blanket that was usually on the foot of my bed. I reached to my desk and shut off my alarm clock on my phone. I heard the deep snores of both Jasper and Emmett.

*They could sleep through a tornado, hurricane and earthquake.*

Bella stirred as I put my phone back on my desk. She blinked her eyes and looked around the room confusedly. I gently brushed her hair off her neck and pressed a kiss there.

"Morning, beautiful. I guess we were more tired than we anticipated," I

chuckled.

"Hmmm..." she replied as she closed her eyes. "Don't want to get up."

"Me neither, but we have theory. Aren't you excited?" I said with mock enthusiasm.

"Fuck, no. I need more sleep," she mumbled as she turned onto her stomach. I crawled over her and padded to the bathroom. I took care of my business and headed back into the room.

"Bella," I cooed. "You really need to get up. It's about 6:30 and..."

Bella shot out of bed like a bullet. She looked at me frantically. "It's 6:30?" she screeched. She then clamped her hands over her mouth as she looked at Jasper and Emmett. "I gotta go and shower. Don't wait for me. I'll meet you at theory. Love you," she said as she dashed out the door.

*Hurricane Bella! Holy Crimoly!*

I shook my head and grabbed some underwear and a towel. I walked back to the bathroom and took a quick shower. I still wanted to make sure that Bella had her coffee. So, after I showered, I grabbed my messenger bag and jacket and I went down to the cafeteria and got two cups of coffee. I needed one as well. I checked my watch and decided to walk to Brandon. I really wanted to walk with Bella, but I was certain she was going to get to class as it was starting. I settled into our usual seats and waited for her come to class. At 7:29, she breezed into class, wearing a pair of workout pants, a fleece, her glasses and a hat on her head. She looked adorable.

I handed the cup of coffee to her and she gave me a kiss as she sat down. Larry was back today and he had to do damage control from James' lesson on Friday. We had an exam on Wednesday and he wanted to make sure that we understood the material. By the end of the class, we were understanding the concepts and much more relaxed about the upcoming exam.

## La Cantante

The rest of the day went by fairly uneventfully. Biochemistry was boggling my mind. I did some practicing for my recital. I went to University Singers and we had an excellent rehearsal. Eleazar received good comments about our performance of the Star Spangled Banner on Saturday. He was very pleased. At the end of rehearsal, he asked for several students to stay back. Bella, Rosalie and I were among the group of eight students.

We all gathered around the piano as Eleazar waited for the rest of choir to leave. When the room had emptied out, Eleazar began speaking. "You're all probably wondering why I asked you to stay."

We all nodded.

"Well, for this concert, I am wanting to do an Old English/Madrigal portion of the concert. I want to show the audience what true madrigals perform like. We could do it as a large group, but it's not as effective. You, as a small ensemble, will be performing five pieces. Here they are. They are traditional madrigals. You will not have a conductor. You will have rely on each other for cut-offs, entrances and dynamics. Some of you probably sang these pieces, so they may be familiar. I would to meet with you as a group on Wednesday after rehearsal. Edward, I know you have piano immediately after class. I've arranged for you to make up half of your lesson on Friday during class.

"Please be familiar with the pieces by Wednesday. They are easy reads and you should have no problem with them. Any questions?"

"Are we going to using costumes?" Rosalie asked.

"Good question. However, we will not. Any others?"

We all shook our heads and Eleazar sent us on our way. Rosalie, Bella and I went to lunch and then hung out in their room. It was a quiet afternoon. It was definitely needed after the insane hectic morning and fun-filled weekend.

xx LC xx



## La Cantante

The rest of the week passed uneventfully. Breaking Midnight had another rehearsal for our Homecoming party gig on Wednesday evening. Bella's guitars came in and she was much more confident using those. She said to me that she was afraid that she was going to damage mine. I didn't really care, but it made her more comfortable to use her own.

Thursday rolled around and we had Express rehearsal. Tia came to introduce her replacement, Rosalie. She did very well. She caught on with the choreography very quickly. We also learned our "closer" which was The Irish Blessing and two other pieces. We finished learning the choreography for the Gloria Estefan Medley and began working on one of our new pieces. After we ended rehearsal, Felix took Rose to get her dress and shoes. Bella and I waited for her. She walked out with the same expression as Bella when she got her dress. Rose then smacked me on the arm saying that I sucked for being a guy. I get to wear a tuxedo. I countered with I have more clothes on and it costs more to dry clean. Bella and Rose shared a look and snickered.

We walked back to Patterson and I said good night to the girls. I wanted to plan some alone time with Bella, so I needed to beg my roommates for the room sometime this weekend. We had no time to ourselves this week. We both had huge papers due in one of our classes. I had a difficult lab for biochem and Bella had a psychology exam. We were very focused on our studies.

I dragged my body up the stairs to my room after I dropped off Bella and Rose. I unlocked the door and found both of roommates there. They were playing on the Xbox. I walked in and flopped down on my bed. I rolled to lay on my stomach and watch them kill each other on the television screen.

"Hey guys," I said.

"Hey, Edward. How was dance practice?" Emmett asked.

"It's not *dance practice*, you douche. It's show choir rehearsal."

"You sing and you dance. It's dance practice," he countered.

## La Cantante

"Whatever. I have a favor to ask you," I began.

"Let me guess, you need the room?" Jasper chuckled.

"You are correct, Jas. Bella and I have no time together and I do not want to get a hotel room," I said.

Emmett turned his body and glared at me. I shrank back at his stare. "Why would you need a hotel room, Edward?" Emmett sneered.

"Seriously, Em?" I chuckled nervously.

"You're not fucking my sister, are you?" he growled.

"What! No! If we do, it's none of your business. I thought you were okay with this," I defended.

"I'm okay with you dating. Having sex, fucking or whatever, not so much," Emmett snarled.

"Emmett, I promise you. I've been nothing but a perfect gentleman to your sister. We haven't had sex. Jeez. Relax, man," I said.

"I'm trying, bro. I mean, I didn't kick your ass for sleeping with her on Sunday did I? I even tucked you in," Emmett replied.

"That was you? Uh, thanks. I think."

"No problemo, Eduardo. I don't know if this works for Jasper, but I have an away game with the football team on Saturday. I'll be leaving early in the morning and won't get back until Sunday afternoon. Would Saturday work?"

"That's fine with me. How about you, Jas?"

"Alice and I are going to some musical in New York City, so we'll be gone as well. That's fine."

## La Cantante

"You're taking Alice to New York City. As in overnight? As in a hotel room?" I asked.

"Yep. She wants to see *Legally Blonde*. I found tickets online for this weekend and we're going. Don't tell her though, it's a surprise."

"Overnight. Sleeping in the same bed," I growled.

"Yep. No sex. I promise," Jasper replied, as his voice cracked.

"Don't worry about it, Jas. If you do, please use a condom. I don't want to be an uncle at 20," I said as I winked at Emmett. Jasper let out a nervous chuckle and Emmett bellowed.

"I guess I should take lessons from you, Edward. You're one smooth operator. Whitlock here almost pissed his pants. Good one," Emmett boomed as gave me a fist bump.

"Awesome guys! Thanks!" I said appreciatively. Now, I needed to figure out what to do with Bella on Saturday.

*Oh, the possibilities.*

xx LC xx

Friday dragged. Time seemed to stand still it was so slow. I met Bella for theory and she was dressed up in a pair of black dress pants and a purple cardigan set. After University Singers, she was taking my car to go to work with Garrett. She only had two more sessions with him after this week and then her hours would be complete.

Larry had our exams graded in music theory. Bella and I both did extremely well. We went to The Cage and had a celebratory stack of pancakes. I trudged off to biochemistry after breakfast. I really hated this class. After biochem, I walked back to Patterson to grab my car. I parked it in front of Brandon Hall that way Bella could leave immediately after University Singers. I went into

## La Cantante

my practice room and ran through a few pieces for my recital. I was still struggling with a few sections of the Liszt piece. I worked through them slowly and managed to get them pretty comfortable.

I then headed to choral rehearsal. I had spoken with Benjamin during my piano lesson on Wednesday and he told me that if I put in an extra half hour of practice, we didn't need to make up the lesson. After our warm up, Eleazar wanted the small ensemble to perform the pieces we were preparing for the madrigal portion of our concert. He wanted the students to critique us. We all stood up in the front of the rehearsal room. Bella gave us our tonic note for our first piece, "Psallite" by Michael Praetorius. I began this piece, as the tenors started it out. The other tenor, Austin was not as comfortable leading. We then continued with "Masters in this Hall," "Lo, How a Rose 'Ere Blooming," "Fum, Fum, Fum," and "Sicut Cervus." We started with the easier pieces and ended with the most challenging one.

The choir offered us suggestions and critiques. However, they were very impressed that we learned the five pieces in one half-hour rehearsal. Little did they know that most of us spent time in a practice room plunking out notes and running it in small groups. Bella, Rose and I pulled Jasper in to a rehearsal one day to fill out the chords. The four of us performed the pieces to Angela, Ben, Alice and Emmett.

When we finished our mock performance, Eleazar wanted us to split up into sectionals. We were to split up by part. Bella gave me a panicked look. It was typical for Eleazar to give the section leaders a heads up when we were to have sectionals, but not all of the time. I gently patted her hand and reassured her that she would be fine. She took the sopranos into a small rehearsal room and I did the same for the tenors. We were told to work a small portion of a piece from Rene Clausen's "Set Me as a Seal." We had about fifteen minutes to do so. We focused our attention on the portion of the piece that needed to be addressed. We plunked out notes, corrected rhythms, put it into context with the rest of the piece and performed the whole song. After our fifteen minutes, we headed back to large ensemble room. The rest of the groups were back except for the sopranos. Eleazar gave me a nod and I went to get them. I didn't have to go far as I heard them walking back from their rehearsal space.

## La Cantante

Bella and sopranos took their spots in the choir and Eleazar gave us our pitches. We began the piece. We ran it beginning to end. Eleazar focused his attention on the basses and altos. There were a few spots that I heard that the tenors flubbed on, but they were easily fixed. Before he dismissed the class, he passed out two pieces. One piece was for the women and the other was for the guys. He wanted us to look over the parts and be prepared to read them on Monday. As we were gathering our stuff to leave, Eleazar called up Bella and I.

Bella glanced at her watch and gave me another panicked look. She was stressing about getting to her observation hours on time. I gave her a kiss on the cheek and put my car keys into her palm. "You'll make it, beautiful. I already have the address set up in the GPS. It'll give you turn by turn directions. Come on, let's see what Eleazar wants."

Bella put the car keys into her pocket and we walked up to our director. "Fabulous job, you two with your sectionals. I was extremely pleased with the progress both of you made with your sections in vocal production, dynamics and articulations."

"Thank you, Eleazar," Bella said with a smile. I grinned in agreement.

"There is something that I want both of you to do. The pieces I passed out today, I want both of you to conduct them. Bella, you'd do the men's piece and Edward, the women's. I know that neither one of you has had choral conducting as class. I'd work with you with gestures, entrances and cut-offs. However, I'm not concerned. I also want you both to rehearse the pieces. In all my years of teaching, I've never worked with such two fabulous musicians as yourselves. Bella, where ever you get a job as a conductor, they will gain a great asset. Edward, I only wish you were a music major."

"You and me, both, Eleazar. I'm trying. Believe me, I'm trying," I said dejectedly.

"So, will you two take me up on my offer? I'll arrange it through the registrar that you both will get a course credit as an independent study."

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"Definitely," Bella said immediately. Eleazar handed her a copy of "River in Judea," the men's piece. He turned to me and I nodded emphatically. He handed me a copy of "Listen to the Angels Shouting," which was the women's song.

"I want to see your proposed rehearsal plans on Monday. You'll both lead the groups in the read-through on Monday as well. Don't fret about this too much. Have fun with it. Email me if you have concerns," Eleazar said with a warm smile. He shook my hand and gave Bella a quick hug and headed to his office.

"Oh, I'm so excited! However, I have to go to skedaddle," Bella said hurriedly. "I should be back by no later than 5-ish?"

"No rush. Drive safely. I love you, *il mio cantante*."

"*L'amo più, il mio musicista dotato ed intelligente*," she said as she gave me a kiss.

I shook my head in confusion, "What did you say, beautiful?"

Right before she left, she called out, "I love you more, my talented and intelligent musician. *Ciao, bello!*"

I leaned against the piano and smiled at my beautiful girl. I couldn't be more proud of her.

*I will make her my wife.*

xx LC xx

Seeing as I didn't get any phone calls from Bella, I assumed she got to my old high school with no problems.

I went back to my room and began looking at the score that Eleazar gave me. It was going to be a challenge. There was a great deal of syncopation, meter changes and key modulations. I was ready for the challenge. Perhaps doing this

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would help solidify my stance on being a music major. The head of the entire department was hoping that I would switch majors. It would not be without its difficulties, but I would be doing what I love, not what I am obligated to do. Hell, I'd be willing to be a music education major if it made him happy and I could proceed with my dream. I did something that I never usually did and I called him at work.

"Dr. Cullen's office," greeted the receptionist.

"Is Dr. Cullen available? This is his son, Edward."

"Just one moment, Edward." The receptionist put me on hold and I listened to some canned classical music. It was horrible.

"Edward?" Carlisle asked. "Is everything alright? Are you hurt?"

"Uh, no, Dad. I wanted to call you and tell you some good news," I responded nervously.

"Oh, what's that?" he replied.

*Shit, I can't do this. He's going to be pissed. Fuck!*

"Well, you know I'm a part of the elite choir here at Emerson, the University Singers. I'm a section leader," I began.

"I know this, Edward. You should be extremely proud of your accomplishments. I am. It makes you a well-rounded young man."

"Anyhow, after rehearsal today, Eleazar, the director of University Singers and the head of the music department, asked Bella and I to speak with him. Bella is the soprano section leader. This is quite an accomplishment as a freshman. Well, he complimented us on our leadership skills. We had an unannounced sectional today and our sections did the best of the group."

## La Cantante

"You're rambling, Edward. Are you nervous about something?" Carlisle asked, amusedly.

"A little," I said as I huffed out a breath.

"Don't be. I know I may come off as being an ass when it comes to your music, but you are extremely talented and I'm proud of you."

"Wow, Dad. That's unexpected," I said, shockingly.

"I'm taking there's more to your story?"

"Yeah. After Eleazar complimented Bella and I, he offered us an opportunity to conduct a piece with the University Singers. We would get an independent study credit and Eleazar, who is the best conductor I know, would be working with us to conduct, rehearse and perform the piece of music. Um, he then mentioned that I was one of the best young musicians he's worked with since he became a teacher and that it was a shame I wasn't a music major," I finished quietly.

I heard Carlisle breathing on the other end of the phone. I didn't know what to expect. Would he change his mind? Would he continue to push me to be doctor?

"That's wonderful news, Edward. The next time you come home, we'll have a great deal to discuss."

"Thanks, Dad."

"I can't wait to see this concert. Do you have the date available? I want to put it in my calendar," Carlisle asked.

"It's November 20th, at 7pm in Brandon Hall."

"Fantastic. Edward, I have to go. I have a patient waiting. I'm proud of you and I love you," Carlisle said quickly.



## La Cantante

"I love you too, Dad. I'll talk to you later," I said as I hung up the phone.

*He didn't blow up. He said we had a great deal to discuss! Is he buckling?*

I lay down on my bed and thought about my conversation with my dad. Perhaps I can do what I want.

*Keep your fingers crossed.*

xx LC xx

Bella got back from her hours with Garrett at 5:30. The six of us decided to go out to eat to celebrate the end of another week. After dinner we headed back to Patterson and watched a movie in our room. We decided to make it an early night. Emmett had to get up early for the football game. Jasper and Alice also needed to get up early to head to New York City for their trip to see *Legally Blonde*. When Jasper told her, Alice squealed so loudly, we all temporarily lost our hearing. Rosalie asked them if they wanted to stay at her parents' place to save money. Jasper nodded his head yes and Rose made the call. She then decided to drive with them to spend the weekend with her parents. Bella and I had all of Saturday to ourselves. No roommates, no interruptions, just us.

I reluctantly let Bella head down to her room. She left with the girls. As soon as they left, Emmett and Jasper decided to turn in. I grabbed my iPod and settled into my bed. I listened to some music. I also downloaded a recording of the song I would be conducting for University Singers. I eventually turned my iPod to my classical playlist and I drifted to sleep.

I woke up the next morning to Emmett banging around the room looking for his Athletic Trainer polo. He was originally on the football team as a freshman, he told me. However, he blew out his knee and he was hooked on all things related to rehabbing injuries and recovering from surgeries. He walked into Emerson as a finance major but quickly switched to be an athletic trainer after his injury.

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I heard the shower running and assumed that Jasper was in the bathroom. I rolled over and covered my head with my blankets and waited for the noise to dissipate. No such luck. It only got louder.

*Hello! Sleeping roommate here! Not all of us have to be up at the ass-crack of dawn.*

I threw the covers back and glared at Emmett. He was too engrossed in whatever task he was doing to pay attention to me. I then threw a pillow at his head.

*Bulls eye!*

"Dude! What the fuck?" he grumbled.

"I'm trying to sleep here. For the love of all that's holy, keep it down!" I bellowed.

"Sorry, Sleeping Beauty. I can't find my pack," he responded.

"Look for it quietly. You don't need to bang every drawer, door and cabinet in here. Christ!"

"Someone's bitchy this morning," Emmett snipped.

"You bet your ass, I'm bitchy. It's 6:30 on a Saturday and I'm awake. Shut the fuck up," I said angrily.

"You need to get laid, Cullen," Emmett said. "Perhaps, I can talk to my sister into giving you a blowjob or something. You're panties are in a twist. You need some release."

"This is why I asked for the room, you douche. And seriously, you were ready to hand me my balls earlier this week when I mentioned a hotel. Why are you trying to get Bella to give me a blowjob?"

## La Cantante

"You need to get rid of some of that pent up sexual energy, bro," he chuckled.

"Who says I haven't already?" I countered.

Emmett stopped his frantic search and stared me down. I crossed my arms across my body and quirked my eyebrow. He blew out an angry huff and tossed my pillow back to me. I caught it before it hit my head and curled back up in my bed.

*It's a good day when Emmett Swan is speechless. Victory is mine!*

Jasper came out of the bathroom and he quietly packed his duffel and headed down to Alice's room. Rosalie was driving them to New York City. This was a good thing as my sister drives like a friggin' maniac. Emmett left about ten minutes after that. He smacked my head before he left.

"No fucking my sister, Cullen," he growled.

"Didn't we already cover this, Swan?" I growled back. "You just tried to pimp her out by having her give me a metaphorical blowjob. If I need a release, I can rely on Rosie Palmer, thank you very much."

"Who's that?" Emmett asked.

*Clearly he's not the sharpest tool in the shed. Maybe he was dropped on the head as a child.*

I raised my hand and waved it. Emmett's eyes widened and he smacked me again. "I'd rather you do that than my sister, you douche. Keep it in your pants, Cullen."

I gave him a mock salute and he turned to leave. As soon as he was out the door, I flipped him the bird. Overprotective bastard. I rolled over in my bed and fell back into a fitful sleep.

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I awoke a couple hours later to my phone ringing. *Il Mio Cantante* displayed on my caller ID.

"Good morning, Bella," I said, my voice rough from lack of use.

"Good morning, sunshine," she chirped. "Want to go to breakfast with me?"

"Sure. Let me shower and wake up. I'll be down in a twenty minutes?" I replied as I dragged my ass out of bed.

"Sounds good!"

"Love you, beautiful," I said with a sleepy smile.

"Love you too, handsome. Ciao Bello," she sang and she hung up the phone. I tossed my phone onto my bed and got some clothes and a towel. I took a quick shower, not bothering to shave. I ran my hands through my hair. I really needed to get a haircut. It was more unruly than usual. I brushed my teeth and got dressed. I went back into my room slipped on some shoes and socks, grabbed my wallet, keys and jacket and headed out the door.

I went down the stairs to Bella's floor and strode down the hallway. I nearly ran into Angela as she was walking out of her room with a laundry basket. She dropped it and her clothes went flying.

"Oh, jeez! I'm sorry, Angela!" I exclaimed as I caught her from falling.

"No problem, Edward," she said as she crouched down. I picked up her laundry basket and held it for her. She began gathering her clothes and putting them back into her basket. "Are going to see Bella?"

"We're going to the cafeteria for some breakfast. Would you like to join us?" I asked politely.

"No. That's okay. I have the chore of doing my laundry and writing three papers this weekend. Fun," she said sarcastically as she put her final article of

clothing into the basket and took it from me. "Thanks for the offer. What are your plans for the weekend?"

"Well, after breakfast, I need to get my haircut. I feel like 'Shaggy' from *Scooby Doo*. I then managed to get tickets to the Toronto Philharmonic Orchestra that is performing at Brandon tonight. I'm going to surprise her with the tickets and dinner. Sunday will be homework day/laundry day for me," I chuckled.

"Ugh! Can you give Ben some pointers on being romantic? He's a great guy but his version of a romantic date is going to McFinnigans to watch a sporting event while drinking copious amounts of beer and eating boneless buffalo wings," Angela whined.

"I'll work on him," I laughed. "Have fun with your laundry and your papers. See you later."

"Bye, Edward."

I continued walking down the hallway and knocked on Bella's door. I heard her yelling. I checked the door and it was unlocked. I hesitantly opened the door and saw Bella screaming into her cell phone.

"...I don't know who you are or why you keep calling me but it needs to stop!" she screeched. She turned and looked at me with a helpless look in her eyes. I reached out for the phone. She handed it to me.

"Call this number again, asshole and we'll get the police involved," I growled and I ended the call. I put the phone on the desk closest to me and I gathered Bella into my arms and held her tightly. I could hear her sniffing against my shirt. I soothingly rubbed my hands up and down her back. "It'll be okay, baby. Do you have any idea who it may be?"

"The number keeps showing up as private. However, I get this strange feeling that it may be Jacob," she mumbled against my chest.

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I immediately tensed up. "How would he have gotten the number? It's unlisted and it's in my name," I said tersely.

"My dad told me on Sunday that he ran into Billy at The Lodge on Friday," Bella explained.

"Who's Billy?"

"Billy is Jacob's father. Billy and my dad were very close friends before this all began with Jacob. Friday was the first day that they spoke. Jacob was with him. Perhaps he got the number from my dad's phone when he wasn't looking," she reasoned.

"I wasn't kidding about the police, Bella. These phone calls are increasing in volume. If this private caller tries again I want you to go to the police. Perhaps they can trace the call," I murmured against her hair. She nodded and tightened her hold around my waist. I instinctively did the same to her. I wanted to shield her from this asshole who keeps calling her phone, who could be the same asshole who hurt her with a text message.

*Fucker.*

I began to disentangle my arms from Bella's shaking body. She held to me tighter. I released one arm and I grabbed her jacket from her desk. I put it around her shoulders. She slipped her arms through the sleeves and pulled away. She kept her head down. I reached to bring her chin up. I glided my fingers over her cheek and ran my thumb over her bottom lip. "I'll protect you, Bella. No one can hurt you."

She rested her face against my hand and closed her eyes. A few tears spilled from them and she reached up with her own hands and wiped them away. She pulled her hair from the jacket and grabbed her phone, keys and purse from the desk. "Breakfast?"

"Yeah, but let's not go to the cafeteria. I have to get my haircut. Next to the salon is a great diner that serves the best Belgium waffles, ever. While I

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attempt to get this mane tamed, you could go to the bookstore where you got your gift card. It's on the corner. Sound good?"

Bella nodded and laced her fingers with mine. We headed down to my car and went into the town closest to campus. We decided on the car ride into town that I would get my haircut first and then go to breakfast. Bella was feeling a little queasy from the incident with the phone. I parked the car in front of the salon. I pointed to the where the bookstore was and Bella headed off in the direction. I walked into the salon.

*Yes, I go to the salon. I'm not vain but I understand the value of a good haircut. I've had my hair butchered more times than I can care to count thanks to going to Supercuts. I want a stylist who understands my cowlicks, damn it!*

When I got into the salon, I was immediately ushered back to get my hair washed. The stylist who cut my insane hair was no taller than Bella but had bright pink hair. I was concerned when I saw her hair color but she actually gave me a good cut. She finished up and put some stuff in it to make it look piece-y. Whatever that means. I gave her a good tip and went to the front to pay. When I walked back to the front of the salon, Bella was sitting in the waiting area, reading a book. I finished paying and plopped down on the bench next to her. I put my chin on her shoulder and was reading with her.

"Hmmm...you smell good, baby," she said.

"It's that crap they put in my hair. It looked a huge tin of lip palm, but not," I said as nuzzled her shoulder.

"Pomade, baby. You should get some. Your hair looks, how does Rose put it? Fuckhawt?" she teased.

"Really?"

"Uh huh. Get some. Please, for me?" she said as she pouted. She gave me big, puppy dog eyes and jutted out her bottom lip.

*How can I resist that?*

"Be right back," I said as I dashed up to the counter. I asked the sales clerk for the pomade, or whatever, and she happily rang me up a container. She handed it to me and I slipped it into my pocket. I walked back to my beautiful Bella and extended my hand to help her up. She put her book into her bag by her feet and stood up. We walked to the diner next door and we ordered breakfast. Bella ended up getting Bananas Foster Waffles and I got the stuffed French Toast. It was delicious.

We headed back to campus after eating our fill of breakfast. As we drove back to Emerson, I turned and grinned at Bella at a stop light.

"What's that smile for, Cullen? You look like the Cheshire cat," she teased.

"I have a surprise for you," I said as I picked her hand kissed her knuckles.

"We're not going clubbing again, are we? After our expedition to *Eclipse*, I am perfectly happy never stepping foot into a club again."

"No. We're not going clubbing. If we do, I'm never leaving your side. That way no assholes would try to put their paws on you. They will know that you're mine. I got us tickets to the symphony," I said as the light turned green. I pulled away from the stoplight and we continued on our way to Emerson.

"No way. The Toronto Philharmonic? The world famous symphony orchestra that is playing at Brandon? Tonight?" she squeaked.

"The very same. They're not the best seats, but we're not there to watch, but to listen. Are you happy?" I asked.

"Happy? No. Ecstatic? Hell, yeah! Thank you, Edward! I love you so much, baby!" she squealed.

"I love you too. Here's my plan. The tickets are for 7 this evening. We go to the concert. They're playing Mahler's *New World Symphony*, by the way. We then



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go to dinner. There's a fabulous sushi place just off campus. Work for you?" I asked with huge grin.

"Definitely. It's about two now. I do need to get some homework done. I have to write up a reflection of my time with Garrett for my education class. It needs to be five to seven pages long. I then need to do some research for my psychology paper. I'm doing a research project on how music and psychology go hand in hand. I got this awesome book for the basis of my paper. How about we meet down in my room at 6?" Bella suggested.

I pouted. I wanted to spend some time with her. I pulled into a parking spot in Patterson and gave her my own puppy dog pout. "I wanted to spend some time with you," I whined.

"Want some cheese with your 'whine,' Edward? If you hang around with me, I'll just want to jump you."

"You say that like it's a bad thing," I admonished.

"It's not, but I don't want my boyfriend distracting me from my homework. Don't you have biochemistry to work on or some calculus problems?" she teased.

"Yeah, I do. Fine. I'll do my *homework*. So responsible. Also, we have the rehearsal plans we have to do for our respective pieces for University Singers," I reminded her.

"Mine is already done. I woke up early this morning because Alice and Rose were really loud. I decided not to fight it and I completed my rehearsal plan, score study and I even created some warm-ups on Finale to help with some rhythm issues," she said smugly.

"Damn. You have been busy. Perhaps tomorrow you could help me with my piece, since yours is done?" I asked.

"I suppose," she grumbled.

## La Cantante

"You are the music education major. You want to do this. I'm just a pre-med major who was roped into conducting a women's piece of music," I said as I batted my eyelashes.

"Okay, you look like you're having a seizure. Stop that. I'll help you. Tomorrow. I'll see you in a little bit, handsome. Love you," she said with a brief kiss.

"No way. I want a better one," I muttered. I pulled back to my body and pressed her against the car. She drew in a sharp intake of breath as I leaned down and gave her a deep, bone-melting kiss. Her soft lips move with mine and I trace my tongue along her lower lip. She moans and snakes her hands around my waist. She pulls my hips to hers and she swivels. Her body rubs against my cock in the most perfect way. She pulls my top lip between her teeth and she nibbles. It sends a current of electricity that goes straight to my dick. She moves her hands to my chest and gently pushes away.

"You. Are. A. Distraction," she said, punctuating each word with a kiss. "Go do some calculus. That should help with your little problem." She gave me one more kiss and walked away, tossing a wave over her shoulder.

"You know there is nothing little about it, Swan," I called to her.

"Love you, baby," she sang.

"Love you more, beautiful," I responded.

*Death of me, Bella Swan will be. Since when do I channel my inner-Yoda?*

xx LC xx

After three and half grueling hours of being separated from my beautiful Bella, I decided to get ready for our date to the symphony. I pulled out a pair of charcoal gray dress pants, a light blue dress shirt and blue/gray tie. I decided to carry a jacket, but not wear it. I put on some cologne after I brush my teeth and head down to Bella's room. When I get there, her room is already open and she

## La Cantante

is sitting at her desk putting on some jewelry. Bella was wearing the same dress that she wore to Baci's for her birthday. Her hair is curled and pulled half up.

"You look beautiful, as always," I said as I entered the room.

"You look incredibly handsome, as well," she replied. "Alice will kill me though. She told me that I should always wear heels when I go out. I'm rebelling and wearing flats."

"A wise decision as we are walking to Brandon," I said as stood behind her. I kissed the top of her head and nuzzled her hair. We hung out in her room for about fifteen minutes before heading to the auditorium in Brandon Hall. We got there and we were seated. The musicians were all warming up on stage. At seven, the conductor walked onto the stage and they tuned their instruments.

Bella leaned in to me, "That's not an A," she murmured.

I looked at her confusedly. I then realized that her perfect pitch was kicking in. All orchestras tune to the pitch A-440. The number is the frequency of the sound waves. I leaned back to her, "What is it, then?"

"It's a hair sharp of B-flat. It's going to drive me crazy all night," she shuddered.

"Do you want to go?"

"I'll be fine, but if I'm antsy, you'll know why," she explained. She settled back into her seat and we waited for the concert to begin. The conductor raised his arms and the musicians brought their instruments to their playing position. They began the piece of music. Bella was right, she was incredibly fidgety.

Other than being in the wrong key, the symphony was actually very good. About an hour later, we walked to Tsunami, the sushi place. It was about a fifteen minute stroll from Brandon Hall.

## La Cantante

We enjoyed some good food. Bella had never had sushi. She was originally grossed out at the thought of eating raw fish. However, by the end of dinner, she was a fan. She begged me to take her there again. I would happily oblige. I paid the bill and we walked back leisurely to Patterson. As we were walking back to campus, Bella had gotten cold. I offered her my jacket. We continued back to campus, our hands linked, moving at a comfortable pace. It was a perfect evening.

We walked up to my room and Bella shrugged out of my jacket. I took it from her and hung it in my closet. I had originally turned on the overhead light. I quickly flipped on a lamp on my desk and turned off the light in the room. The dorm room now had a more warm feel to it. Bella was standing in front of the bookcase in the room, looking at the movies that were held there. I walked behind her and slipped my arms around her waist. She placed her hands on my forearms and cuddled back into my chest.

"Thank you for this evening, Edward. Despite the key issue, I had a good time," she said quietly. She lifted one of my hands and kissed my palm. She then drew one of my fingers into her mouth and began sucking. I groaned at the sensation and pressed my hips to her ass. She released my finger and looked over her shoulder to me. Her eyes were hooded and her cheeks were flushed. I swallowed and gazed at her beautiful face. She turned her body to face me and she brought her warm hands and cupped my cheeks. My eyes darkened at the gorgeous creature in front of me. She pulled my face down to hers. She pressed feather light kisses on my cheeks, my nose, my Adam's apple, the shell of my ears, my eyes and finally ending with my mouth. It began as a sweet kiss, barely brushing of the lips. Each kiss, each caress, each touch made me harder. She gently touched my face, tracing the curve my cheeks, my jaw, and teasing caresses on my lips. "I love you, Edward."

Her words were my undoing. I leaned down and crashed my lips to hers. She opened her mouth and I plunged my tongue into it. Her mouth was warm and tasted so good. I reached down with my hands and grasped her thighs. I lifted her up and she wrapped her legs around my waist. Her hands flew to my hair. I carried her to my bed and laid her down, never breaking our heated embrace. I pinned her body with mine. I could feel the heat emanating from her core. Her

skin was on fire. She pulled away, gasping for breath. I continued kissing and licking her elegant neck. I swiveled my hips as she moaned when I pulled her ear between my teeth. I raised my body up and looked at her. Her hair was spread over my pillow and she was breathing heavily.

I gently raised my hand and traced the curve of her face, gliding my thumb over her swollen lips. "So beautiful. Like an angel," I whispered. Bella reached up and undid my tie. She threw it on the floor. I continued lightly caressing her exposed skin with my fingertips. She squirmed and her eyes rolled back. I leaned back in and pressed a kiss to her plump lips. I continued kissing down her neck and I stopped at her chest. I placed my ear to where her heart was rapidly beating. I closed my eyes and listened to the vital organ. As I was laying on her chest, I reached with my hand and felt for the tie of her wrap dress. I lifted my head and asked permission with my gaze. She pulled me to her lips and kissed me. I gently tugged on the tie and it easily came undone. Her fingers began working the buttons on my shirt. She pulled my shirt from my dress pants and when about half of the buttons were unbuttoned, I pulled the shirt from my head. I tossed it on the floor with my tie.

I sat back on my knees and pulled Bella up with me. Her dress began to fall open. She reached to the edge of her dress and began pulling it down her shoulders. She wiggled out from underneath me and removed the rest of the dress. I gulped at the vision standing before me.

"Do you like, Edward?" she asked coyly.

After she had removed her dress, she was wearing a dark blue, see-through bra and panty set. I nodded, as I didn't trust my voice not to crack. I reached for her wrist and brought her back to the bed. She kneeled before me on the bed. I ran my hands over her arms. I continued my tender strokes over her collarbones, between her breasts, her taut belly, her gorgeous back and finally settling my hands on her breasts. "You are the most perfect creature I've ever seen, Bella. I will never see anyone as beautiful as you."

I gently massaged her breasts as she mirrored the action I did with her to my body. I lowered one of my hands and grabbed her ass. I moved her closer to

me, her body flush with mine. I kissed her and she thrust her hips against mine. I pulled us down to the bed. Bella reached for the button of my pants and she deftly flicked it open and lowered the zipper to my fly. She pushed my pants over my hips. I kicked them off the rest of the way. I pulled her so she was straddling my legs. I could feel her warmth settle over my cock. The only thing preventing us from going all the way was two scraps of fabric; the lacy fabric of panties and the cotton of my boxers.

*I really wish it was 'when!'*

"Edward," she pleaded.

"What do you want, baby?" I said huskily.

"I want your hands on me, please," she begged.

I sat up and kissed Bella's lips. As our lips moved in tandem, I reached behind her and went to unclasp her bra. I found nothing. I pulled away with a confused look on my face. Bella smirked and reached between her breasts and flicked it open. I blushed and I pushed the offending object away from her perfect form. I leaned down and kissed her breasts. She tossed her bra onto the floor and then ran her hands through my hair. I grabbed one breast with my hand and rubbed my thumb over the nipple. Bella's back arched and I turned my face to her other breast. I pulled it into my mouth and swirled my tongue over her erect peak of her breast. She moaned at my touch. Her moans were like fire, causing my blood to boil. I rolled my hips and flipped us over. Bella was underneath me. I kissed back up her neck and gave her a searing kiss. Her hand crept to my boxers. She slipped her hand into them and reached for my cock. Her tiny hand gripped my shaft and began pumping. She used her thumb to massage the tip. As she played with me, I pulled her bottom lip between my teeth, causing her to moan loudly. She loosened her grip on my dick and I took the opportunity to make her feel good.

I pressed my body to hers and grabbed her leg and hitched it around my hip. Her hand left my boxer shorts as I swiveled my hips against hers. I could feel how wet she was. She had soaked through her panties. It made me harder and I

wanted her more.

"You're so wet, baby," I whispered against her lips.

"Only for you, Edward," she cried.

"What do you want, Bella? Do you want to come?" I growled.

"Oh, god. Yes!"

I reached down to the top of her panties. I leaned back and lowered her leg from my hip. She was breathing heavily and was watching my every move. My eyes never broke her gaze. I gently pulled her panties down and tossed them on the floor. I swept my eyes over her body. I licked my lips. I returned my stare to Bella's beautiful eyes. They were darkened and hooded with lust. I brought myself forward and pinned her to the bed. I gave her another kiss. This kiss was different. I poured all of my love for her into it. I then nibbled down her body, licking and sucking as I went. I reached the apex of her thighs and I nuzzled my nose there. She was so turned on. I could see her arousal glisten on her inner thighs.

I settled myself between her legs and I nibbled on her thighs. I looked and I saw the mark I had put there last weekend. I turned and bit down on the same spot. She screamed and arched her back. I pushed her legs further apart and I gave a swift lick to her clit. Her hips bucked at my touch. She was so hot and so wet. I pulled the sensitive nub into my lips and brought her close to orgasm. She was writhing and moaning at my touch. I looked up at her and her hands moved to her breasts. I pulled away and blew on her clit.

"I like when you do that, baby," I murmured.

"Do what, Edward?" she purred. "This?" She brought her hands to her breasts and began fondling them. She looked me in the eyes and continued feeling her breasts.

## La Cantante

I moaned and I spread Bella with my hand. I licked the length of her slit. She whimpered and I slipped a finger into her warm, moist heat. I nibbled on her clit and her movements became more erratic. I added a second finger and twisted my hand so I could massage her g-spot.

"Edward, that feels so good," she cried. "Don't stop, please."

"Never, baby."

I added a third finger and pulled her clit between my teeth and bit down lightly. She screamed and I could feel the muscles clench around my fingers. I pumped faster and licked her until I felt her clamp down on my fingers and she was screaming my name. I kept my lips pressed to her as she rode out her orgasm. I removed my fingers and I kissed my way up her body. She was still breathing heavily. She grabbed my face and kissed me passionately. She plunged her tongue into my mouth and I groaned. My hand was splayed on her stomach and her hands were fisted in my hair.

She pushed me onto the bed so I was on my back, never breaking our kiss. She reached down with one hand and pulled down my boxers. As she continued to kiss me, she grasped my dick in her hand and began pumping. She pulled away from our kiss and licked her hand for some extra lubrication. She ran her hand up and down my cock. She continued kissing me as she gave me a hand job. I moaned softly.

"What do you want Edward?"

"I want you, Bella. I want you so badly," I groaned.

"Good things come to those who wait," she growled. She kissed down my body and pressed a kiss the head of my cock. My hips bucked at the sensation. She looked back at me and tossed her hair to the side. "I know you like to watch." She took the head of my erection and brought it into her mouth. She swirled her tongue around the head and gently massaged my balls. I watched with rapt attention. She moved her mouth down my shaft and used her other hand to pump. She bobbed her head in an amazing rhythm. I reached and I began



## La Cantante

touching her breasts. She moaned against my cock. She moved faster and my hips moved on their own volition. I could feel my own orgasm building. She gently ran her teeth over my dick and I was about to explode.

"Bella...Oh...God! Don't stop," I cried.

She pumped furiously with her hand and she licked my cock. I put my hand on her head as my orgasm was coming. She turned her head and grazed her teeth on the underside of my shaft and I was a goner. I came hard and fast, my entire body spasming. Bella licked the tip of my dick and curled to my side.

"Good?"

"Uh, Edward is not here right now. He's recovering from the most amazing blowjob/orgasm he's ever experienced. Please leave a message after the beep. Beep," I breathed.

Bella giggled. "Most amazing? Damn! You rocked my world, too. I think I saw stars. I'm still tingling."

"If it's this good now, imagine when we do make love. Shit," I mused.

"The angels in heaven will sing, fireworks will go off, the earth will tilt on its axis...you get the idea," she laughed.

"I love you Isabella Swan. You've made me the happiest man on the planet. Thank you," I said as I gave her a kiss.

"I love you Edward Anthony Masen Cullen. You've made feel like the most cherished woman on the planet. Thank YOU!"

"As much as I love seeing you naked, beautiful. We probably should get dressed. If Jasper or Emmett come back early, I don't want them to see my 'fuckhawt' girlfriend in the buff."

## La Cantante

Bella reached down and handed me my boxers. She also got her underwear and my shirt and slipped it over her shoulders. She put the rest of the clothes on my desk. I turned down the covers and settled in. Bella crawled and laid on her side. I pulled her to my chest and put my arm behind her head. I put my head on my pillow and closed my eyes. Before I could fall asleep, Bella asked a question.

"What does 'Masen' stand for?"

"It's my birth parents' last name. My mom was Carlisle's sister and she married my dad, Edward Masen Sr. When he signed over his parental rights, I refused to keep it as my last name. When I was adopted Carlisle and Esme, I became a Cullen. Carlisle and Esme were adamant that keep 'Masen' as middle name, but it will never be my surname. Ever."

"Oh. Do you hear from your real dad?"

"He'll send a letter every so often, but other than that, no."

"Do you miss him?" Bella asked.

"Not really. I was really pissed off when my mom died. Then I began to hate him when he left me with Carlisle and Esme. That hatred eventually turned to indifference. Therapy helped as did music," I explained.

"Would you ever want to see him again?"

"I don't know. Why are you wondering?"

"Just curious. I'm sorry if I made you uncomfortable, Edward."

"Not uncomfortable at all. Actually, I'm very comfortable. I have the most intelligent, most beautiful, most talented woman in my bed. How can I not be comfortable?"

"You're so cheesy, Cullen."

## La Cantante

"Just like cheddar," I said as blew a raspberry to her neck. She giggled.

"I like your brand of cheese. I love you, Edward."

"I love you more, beautiful."

# Nightmares and Drama

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 22: Nightmares and Drama

### BPOV

It's official. Edward's fingers and mouth are magical. They should be bronzed. Holy shit. The things that boy can do with his tongue are earth-shattering. Edward had surprised me with a wonderful evening. A night at the symphony, dinner at a romantic restaurant and naked fun time. This was the best night ever.

I had finally made my decision about my physical aspect of our relationship. I was going to give myself to Edward on Homecoming Weekend. Each touch, each caress ignited my skin. He made me feel loved, cherished, worshipped...I wanted to give him the greatest gift I could offer. Myself.

After our time in his bed, I watched him sleep. His chiseled features were relaxed. His mouth was slightly open and he was snoring, just a bit. I reached up and glided my fingers over his forehead, tracing his eyebrows. I continued ghosting my fingers down his nose, over his cheeks and finally rubbing fingers over his lips. He was truly perfect. I pressed a kiss to his lips and he hummed and held me tighter. I nestled my body closer to his and shut my eyes.

*" Bella, I love you. You are everything to me. I want to spend the rest of my life with you," Edward breathed.*

*" Oh, Edward. I love you so much more than you can imagine. Thank you for everything, for loving me, for protecting me, for being you."*

## La Cantante

*" Bella, I want to ask you something. I promise to love you every moment of forever. Will you..."*

*Edward gave a strangled sob and he reached for his stomach. I pulled away and saw his clothes were covered in blood. He reached for his stomach and tried to stem the bleeding. He fell to his knees and I joined him.*

*" Edward! EDWARD! Please, stay with me! I love you, Edward."*

*He opened his mouth and blood poured out of it. He weakly reached to touch my face and he barely caressed my cheeks when I saw the light flicker from his eyes and his stare become blank. His body went limp in my arms.*

*" No! NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO! Edward, come back! Please!"*

*" It's too late for him, Bella. You're mine. You'll always be mine," came a rough voice.*

*"Bella! BELLA! BELLA! Wake up! Baby, you're having a nightmare!" Edward cried frantically. "Baby, please!"*

I blinked my eyes and looked around me. I turned and I saw Edward's anxious face hovering over mine. I reached up with my hands and grabbed his face. I needed to make sure he was real. When my hands touched the stubbled skin of his cheeks, my hands tingled in the familiar electricity. I sat up very quickly and began sobbing. My whole body was shaking with my cries. Edward pulled me into his lap and let me cry. He was rocking me gently, rubbing soothing circles on my back. I managed to calm down. I took a shaky breath and relaxed in Edward's arms.

"Do you want to tell me about it?" Edward asked gently.

"I dreamt that you were proposing and Jacob killed you. There was so much blood. I saw the light flicker out of your eyes. I saw you die. I felt my heart get ripped out of my chest and I couldn't do anything about it," I said softly. "What started as a perfect dream ended in a horrific nightmare."

## La Cantante

"I can promise you two things, beautiful. One: Jacob will never hurt you or me. Two: I do plan on proposing. Not now, but I have every intention of making you my wife. You are my life. I love you with every ounce of my body, mind and soul. I promise to be by your side for the rest of my life," Edward said reverently.

"I believe you, Edward. I love you."

"I love you much more. Let's get some more sleep," he said quietly.

"I'm afraid," I whispered.

"I'll sing you to sleep. Just close your eyes beautiful," he said. Edward began humming my lullaby and I felt my eyelids get droopy. He held me tightly against the bare skin of his chest. I eventually faded to sleep, always hearing Edward humming my lullaby.

xx LC xx

Edward and I woke up late on Sunday. I went downstairs to my room to shower and get dressed. He did his laundry and I helped him with his rehearsal plan for Eleazar. I created an outline for my psychology paper and started gathering research outside of the book I had bought on Saturday. As I worked on my paper, Edward was typing up a lab report for biochemistry. He was cursing a blue streak over his class. The only time I saw Edward get truly pissed was when he was dealing biochemistry. We then decided to read for history. We took turns reading a paragraph. Edward and I were reading the paragraphs in different accents. We got through two pages before we were both in a fit of giggles.

We never mentioned my nightmare, but I could tell that Edward was worried about me. He was extra attentive and sweet all day. He had to run some errands. When he returned, he had a bouquet of flowers. He told me that he love me until the last flower died. I gave him a speculative look. He told me to look closely at the flowers. Tucked into the bouquet was one silk rose. I nearly cried when I realized what he had meant. He also went to Baci's and picked up

## La Cantante

some mushroom ravioli to go. We ate it in his room.

About five, Emmett had returned from the football game. He looked exhausted. He said that he would have been back sooner but the bus broke down and they had to wait three hours for a replacement to come. Suffice it to say, he was quite pissy when he got home. I took that as my cue to head back down to my room. I really wanted to talk to Alice and Rose about my dream and my revelation. He pouted adorably when I went to leave. I said I needed some girl-time and that I would see him tomorrow at theory. I gathered my books and pushed them into my bag. I slung my bag over my shoulder and gave Edward a brief kiss. Emmett was in the room and watching us like a hawk. After our chaste kiss, I flipped Emmett off. He rolled his eyes and then smacked Edward on the back of the head. I then smacked Emmett and raised the "bitch brow." Emmett apologized to Edward and I scurried downstairs to my room.

When I walked in, Rose and Alice were unpacking from their trip. Rose had brought her laundry with her and was putting it away in dresser. Alice was putting her clothes into her hamper. I walked in and clicked the door shut.

"Hey guys! How was your weekend?" I asked casually.

"Oh my God, Bella! *Legally Blonde* was the most fun musical. Edward has to take you," Alice gushed.

"I saw it, actually."

"Really? When?" Alice asked.

"On MTV when they showed it there. It was cute. What else did you do in NYC?"

"We went to Central Park. We went to the Empire State Building. We visited Ground Zero and we went to the musical. It was a ton of fun!" Alice enthused

"How about you, Rose? How was your weekend?"

## La Cantante

"It was good. It was nice to have some friends in the car while I was driving home. It made the four hour drive palatable. At some point, you'll have to come. You'd love New York City. It's fabulous."

"How about you, Bella? What did you do?" Alice asked sweetly.

"Edward surprised with tickets to the Toronto Philharmonic Orchestra. They performed at Brandon Hall last night. We then went to Tsunami, the sushi place near the west side of campus. After dinner, we went back to Edward's room and had some sexy time?" I said.

"Sexy time?" they both asked.

"You know. We made out and some other stuff," I said sheepishly, pulling my lip into my teeth.

"Like what, Bella?" Rose pressed. "Come on. I don't have a sex life and Pixie is just starting hers."

"Wait a minute, what happened with you Ali?" I asked.

"Um, Jasper and I...well...we...shit...had sex...last night," Alice said, blushing furiously.

"What?" I screeched.

"Oh yes, they had sex. The entire apartment complex heard them. Could you be any louder, Pixie? Christ!" Rose admonished.

"What! Jasper does some amazing things with his tongue. He made me feel all squishy inside."

"Squishy? You know what? I don't want to know," I said as I put my hands up. "Was that your first time, Alice?"



## La Cantante

"Hell no! I lost my virginity when I was fifteen to Danny McDougal. He was cute and I thought I loved him. Turns out he was a two pump chump who just wanted to get into my pants. Edward was pissed. Danny has a crooked nose because of what Edward did to him," Alice replied. "Have you and Edward 'done the deed?'"

"No, not yet. Unlike you, I'm a virgin," I said with an eye roll. "Slut," I giggled as I tossed a pillow at her.

"Eh! Whatever. So what have you and Edward done?" Alice asked.

I felt my cheeks burn up.

*It's now or never. Alice is not a virgin. She can tell you want to do, right?*

"Oh, jeez. I don't know if I can do this," I mumbled.

"Bella, we won't judge you. Let me rephrase. Does he make you feel good?" Rose said diplomatically.

"Does he get you off?" Alice said crassly. Rose smacked her arm and Alice waved her off.

"Fuck. Yes?"

"Are you sure, Bella?" Alice said with a raised brow.

"Christ! Here goes. He's finger fucked me once and gone down on me twice. Happy?" I said, throwing my hands up in the air.

"Now was that so hard?" Alice said as she crossed to me and put her arm around my shoulders.

"You do realize that this is your BROTHER we're talking about. Don't you find that a little weird?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"No. We're not related by blood. What have you done to him?" Alice pressed.

"I gave him a couple of blow jobs," I responded. "I think he enjoyed himself."

"Spit or swallow?" Alice asked bluntly.

"Christ, Alice. I think 'Tact' should be your middle name," I said sarcastically.

Rose giggled. "It's a legitimate question, Bella."

"Not you, too! Ugh, fine. Swallow," I replied.

"Good girl. Spitting is gross. You get jizz everywhere. Blech!" Alice said as she scrunched her nose. "Do you want to have sex with Edward?"

I took a deep breath and nodded. "This is where I need your help. I got the sex talk from my mom. She pretty much said that it would hurt and try not to get pregnant. I can't exactly bring this up with my dad. Or Emmett for that matter. I think they would both shit a brick. Emmett would probably kill Edward."

"Okay, Bella. When do you want to relinquish your v-card?" Alice asked.

"I was thinking Homecoming weekend. Why?" I asked.

"Well, you are going to use your gift certificates to the spa on Friday of Homecoming. We are going to get manicured, pedicured, waxed, buffed and beautified. Not that you're already beautiful, but you know what I mean. No scratch that, we're going on Thursday. That way your skin will calm down from your bikini wax."

"Bikini wax! Oh no! There is no way that I'm having hot wax being poured down there to have hair pulled out. Nuh uh. No way!" I shook my head emphatically.

"Trust me, he will like it. Remember, beauty is pain," Alice chided.

"Fuck."

"In regards to the mechanics of sex, yes it will hurt. Your body will have to get used to his penis and he'll break through your hymen. That's what hurts the first time you have sex. However, it will feel sensational afterward. Now, birth control. Are you on the pill?" Alice asked.

"No. Not the pill. I get the shot. I have a medical condition called Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome, or PCOS that can be controlled with birth control."

"When did you last have your shot?" Rose asked.

"The week before I came here. It's good for three months. I get another one in November," I explained.

"Birth control's covered. Bella, I'm not worried about you and Edward. You two will be fine," Alice said with a warm smile.

"What if I suck at it?" I mumbled.

"Bella, it's not going to be hearts, flowers and fireworks the first time. Trust me, I know. I mean Danny McDougal. My pinky was thicker than his dick. However, it means so much more when you love someone. Jasper and I haven't said it yet, but I feel a strong connection with him because I do love him. You love my brother and he loves you. That's all that matters," Alice said wisely.

"You're lucky, Bella. You'll get the opportunity to GIVE your virginity to someone you love. Mine was taken. Treasure what you and Edward have. He will definitely cherish the gift that you are giving him," Rose said with a sad smile.

"Thanks guys. I appreciate it a lot."

"No problem, Bella. That's what best friends are for," Alice said with a huge grin. She launched herself at me and wrapped her arms around my neck. She pulled Rose and brought her into the embrace as well. We all knocked heads as

we were crushed together by the freakishly strong midget. We broke apart and started laughing hysterically.

xx LC xx

On Monday, things were pretty much the same. Edward met me with a cup of coffee and we headed to theory. I avoided James' gaze during class and Edward looked like the vein was going rupture on his forehead. After class, we went to The Cage and got breakfast. I then went to my education class, psychology and finally University Singers. I had emailed my rehearsal plan to Eleazar on Sunday evening before I turned it in. I had also attached my score study analysis and warm ups that I would like to do when I worked on the piece. When I checked my email this morning, he had replied and said that it looked excellent. I had done a very detailed and thorough job. I helped Edward do the same thing with his piece. During University Singers, Eleazar led us in our warm ups. He used some of the warm ups that I created. He also used some of the warm ups that Edward and I created for his piece as well. Before we began our run through of our pieces, Eleazar explained what he said to us. There were some grumbles from the choir, especially from the upper classmen about we were getting preferential treatment. Eleazar stressed that if anyone in the choir had an issue with the situation, they could discuss it with him during his office hours and not during rehearsal time.

We began the actual rehearsal with the men's piece. It was only going to be a read through. I nervously walked up to the podium, with my score of "River in Judea", which had my notes and scribbles on it, in hand. I spoke briefly to Carmen. I asked her to play the accompaniment but if the guys needed assistance to hop in with parts. She gave me a warm smile and nodded. I did some explanations of my plan for the piece. I said that I wanted to use the opening section as two solos (as there were two verses) however for reading purposes, the tenors would sing the first verse and basses the second. I gave my cue for her to begin and she began playing the piano part. Right before the guys were supposed to enter, I looked at them and gave them a clear entrance. The tenors came in clearly and read through the opening section. I mentally noted some rhythm issues that needed to be addressed but continued on. We managed with Carmen playing the accompaniment until the key change. After the key

## La Cantante

change, which was to be unaccompanied, I gave her a slight nod and she began playing the parts. We completed our read through. I quickly jotted down some notes before giving my feedback to the guys.

"Overall, that was a good run-through. There were some minor rhythm things and some funky note/chord progressions, but they will be addressed the first time we can actually rehearse the piece. Do you have any questions?" I asked

The guys said no. I could see Edward and his brow was furrowed. I didn't want to single him out. I decided to ask him what his take was on the piece after rehearsal. Eleazar smiled at me and gestured for me to sit. He then nodded to Edward, who looked incredibly nervous. I gently patted his knee and gave him an encouraging squeeze. He took a deep breath and headed up to the podium with his music of "Listen to the Angels Shouting." He stopped and briefly spoke to Carmen, probably saying the same thing to her that I did. He took his pencil and stuck it behind his ear.

He raised his hands and gave Carmen her cue to start. You could tell that he was extremely nervous as his tempo that he started was a bit fast. I was comfortable with the song, as I worked with him on it. The others were not. Eleazar walked up to Edward's elbow. Edward stopped conducting and cut off Carmen. Eleazar whispered a few things into his ear. Edward nodded and then shook his head. He turned back to Carmen and she got up off of the piano bench. He settled himself behind it and began playing the accompaniment himself. Eleazar's brows shot up to his head but let Edward continue with his read through. He gave us our entrances with a sharp nod of his head, indicated dynamic changes with the piano and cut us off with a flick of the wrist before returning his hands back to the piano. After our read through, Edward pulled the pencil from his behind his ear and jotted his own notes. He got up from the piano and assessed us on our performance.

"I'm going to be honest with you ladies. I was extremely nervous, if didn't tell. I'm also going to tell you that you could have been singing in Hebrew for all I knew. The few things I noticed were uncertain entrances, but that was probably my fault and unfamiliarity with the piece, some note issues in some of the cluster chords and a bit of breathiness to the overall tone of the piece. Do you

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have any concerns that you need addressed?"

I had about twenty but I bit my lip. I didn't want Edward to shit his pants. The rest of the ladies said no. Edward took another deep breath and headed back to his seat next to me. He slumped down into his chair, looking defeated.

The rest of rehearsal was spent spot checking the other pieces that we were preparing for the concert. Edward was not really singing. He was moving his lips, but he had a distant look in his eyes. I truly felt for him. I wanted to help him in his insecurities on the podium. However, the only way to get over that is to just do it. Eleazar informed us that next week we would have gender specific rehearsals. Men only on Monday and women only on Wednesday. It would be the first opportunity for us to work on our pieces with our groups. Rehearsal had ended and we began packing our things up. Eleazar asked Edward and I to meet him in his office after we gathered our things. I gave Edward a nudge in the ribs to get him moving. He shook his head and crammed his stuff into his messenger bag. The room was nearly empty when we finally got up from our seats.

We started heading to Eleazar's office. Edward grabbed my elbow and looked at me in shock. "How do you do it?" he asked.

"Do what?" I replied, confused by his question.

"Go up there and know what the hell you're doing?" Edward said with sadness in his eyes.

"I'm not sure, Edward. I've always been confident in my performing skills. It just carried over to my conducting skills, I guess?"

"That is beyond confidence, Bella. You look like you belong up there. Self-assured, confident, clear cut-offs and entrances, even adding dynamics and articulations. Me? I had to sit behind the piano and give cut - offs with my head," Edward said dejectedly.

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"Come on, Eleazar is waiting. Perhaps he can provide you with some words of wisdom," I said gently. He nodded, keeping his eyes fixed on the floor. I laced my fingers with his and dragged him into Eleazar's office.

"Please sit," Eleazar said with a smile. "I want to know, how did you feel your first forays on the podium went?"

I looked at Edward and he was fiddling with the hem of his shirt. I laid my hand over his and gave it a squeeze. He took my hand and laced his fingers through mine, still not looking Eleazar in the eyes.

I turned to face Eleazar and gave him a smile. "I was very pleased with my run-through. I really like the piece. There were some rhythm and note issues, but it was fun being in front of the group."

"Edward, what do you think Bella's strengths are as a conductor?" Eleazar asked.

Edward's head snapped up and looked at me. "She's self-assured, confident, and unafraid to make mistakes, gives clear cut-offs and entrances, and has a strong conducting pattern."

"Why did you say that she's unafraid to make mistakes?" Eleazar pressed.

"I'm not sure. I'm just in awe of what she's able to do," Edward mumbled.

"Bella, were you nervous up on the podium?" Eleazar asked me.

"Very much so. I was afraid that I would forget the conducting pattern, that I would cue the wrong section and that I would go too fast."

"In your opinion, are you happy with your time on the podium?" Eleazar continued.

"Yeah. I know I goofed. I'm not perfect. But I'm proud of what I did and I can't wait to do it again," I said.

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"Bella, what do you think Edward's strengths were today?"

Edward ducked his head. He appeared to be ashamed.

"Before you answer that, Bella...Edward how did you think you did today?"

"To be perfectly honest, I sucked. I started too quickly. My hands were shaking and...and...I just sucked."

"Why did you go behind the piano?" Eleazar questioned.

"It's where I'm comfortable. I'm not used to be in front of a choir. I felt so vulnerable. All those eyes staring at me, expecting so much and not being able to give it to them. I needed the buffer of the piano," Edward mumbled.

"Bella, back to my question. What were Edward's strengths?"

"He did have a rough start, but once he went behind the piano his confidence grew. He gave us a clear pulse that was not too fast and was able to indicate tempo and dynamic changes with his playing."

"So, here's what I saw. Bella, I'll start with you. You are very self-assured and confident on the podium. However, it comes off as being a bit smug and cocky. You need to warm up to your group. You have a very clear conducting pattern for someone who has had no conducting experience, ever. I will need to work with you on your gestures, but that's an easy fix. My biggest concern is the group seeing you as a leader. You are a very competent musician, but the upper classmen are not happy with your appointment as section leader and as a guest conductor in this group. However, don't let that upset you. Stay confident and self-assured and you will be fine.

"Edward, you have the makings of being a fine conductor yourself. I think you let the nerves get to you. You have a strong pattern and I know that you can lead a rehearsal. You've done it numerous times last year. I was concerned when you stepped behind the piano. I understand now that it was almost a security blanket. The next time you rehearse with the women, you will not be



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able to do so. You can't have a piano in front of you all of the time.

"Essentially, you each have what the other needs. The next time we have gender-specific rehearsals, not next week but in two weeks following that, I want you both to conduct each other's pieces. You can learn some new and different ways to approach a piece when you see it through each other's eyes. Edward, get a little cocky, without the piano. Bella, show some humility, warm up to your group. Any questions?"

Both Edward and I shook our heads. Eleazar handed us both our rehearsal plans that we had emailed him. He had made some notes on there. "Overall, I'm very pleased with what both of you have done," he said as he stood up behind his desk. We got up from our chairs and began gathering our things. "Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. See you both on Wednesday."

Edward and I walked out of Eleazar's office and I grabbed his hand. I tugged on it and pulled out my keys from my pocket. I dragged him upstairs to my practice room. I unlocked my door and led him inside. My room was smaller than his. It had an upright piano, a small chair and a music stand. I pulled him on to the piano bench and grasped his face. I forced him to look at me in the eyes. They were still filled with sadness, shame and another emotion that I couldn't place.

"Edward, you do not suck. You could never suck. You are amazing. Don't ever forget that," I said forcefully.

"Bella," he said as he removed my hands from his cheeks, "Were you not in the SAME rehearsal I was in?"

"Yes, I was. I saw a novice conductor who made beginning mistakes. Not someone who 'sucked,'" I replied.

"You're a novice and you didn't make any mistakes," he snapped.

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"Bull shit. I missed entrances. I didn't count correctly. I made a ton of mistakes," I snapped back. "I'll let you in a little secret, Edward. I'm fucking terrified that I'm going to screw up and make a total fool out of myself. I'm fucking terrified that the choir will not take me, a freshman, seriously. I'm fucking terrified that this project is going to do something to our relationship. You can't compare yourself to me and I sure as hell cannot compare myself to you. Eleazar is right. Your strength is my weakness and vice versa. So stop brooding and work with me, god damn it!"

I glared at him. I hopped up off of the piano bench and began pacing the small room. I ran my hands through my hair furiously and plopped down on the chair in the corner. I leaned forward and put my head in my hands.

"You're right, Bella," he said quietly. "I'm sorry that I snapped at you. I was having my own little pity party over here and I took it out on you. We both have our strengths and weaknesses. If we do work together, we can improve our strengths and negate the weaknesses. You have nothing to be terrified about. I am so sorry. So very sorry. Can you forgive me?"

"Of course, I forgive you. I guess we just had our first fight?" I said lightly.

"I guess we did. I'm sorry that it was over something so stupid. There is one positive thing that can come out of this," he said as he scooted closer to me on the piano bench.

"What's that?"

"Making up," he replied with a suggestive twitch of his brows.

*Oh good lord!*

xx LC xx

Edward spent the next four days "making up" with me. Any moment that we were alone, he kissing me, touching me, caressing my cheek, grabbing my ass and pulling me into a passionate embrace. He also got me some more flowers

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and a stuffed lion he saw at the flower shop. He said that my hair looked like the lions mane in the morning. I chuckled and said that it looked more like his hair, sticking up every which way. He glared at me playfully.

He wanted to do more, physically, but I wouldn't let him. My Aunt Flo had come to visit and I'm pretty certain that *that* was not going to happen. On Friday, I went to work with Garrett. I felt weird driving there without Edward. I was panicked that I would total the Soccer Mobile. Edward said that he trusted me implicitly with his car. I still was not comfortable. I told him about what Eleazar was having us do and about my first rehearsal. He concurred with Eleazar's assessment and gave me a few tips. He also worked on some gestures for the piece and provided some insight on the style of the piece. I headed back to Emerson after my time with Garrett. I only had two more visits with him before my hours were over. He said that I could come back anytime and that if I needed a letter of recommendation he would be more than happy to write one for me.

When I got back to campus, I had to go directly to Brandon. We had Breaking Midnight rehearsal. Edward didn't want to have rehearsal on Friday night, but it was the only day that worked for all of us. Jasper had some clinic thing that he had to go to on Saturday, returning on Sunday and Emmett had another away game and wouldn't get back until very late on Saturday night. That meant that Edward and I would have his room to ourselves this weekend, until Emmett got back.

I pulled into the parking lot behind Brandon Hall and raced into the building. Edward was bringing my guitars with his stuff. My keyboard was being stored with the rest of the equipment in the storage locker the guys had rented. I unlocked the door and turned the corner to the freight elevator. I slammed into someone and I was sprawled out on the floor.

"I'm sorry, Isabella. Let me help you up," a scratchy voice said.

I immediately recognized the voice as James'. He leaning down with his hand in my face. "No, thanks. I've got it," I mumbled. I scrambled up and bent down to pick up my messenger bag and several papers that had flown out of there. I

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stuffed the papers in my bag and pulled it over my head.

"You look very nice today, Isabella. Why are you all dressed up?" James said seductively. "Hot date, tonight?"

"Uh, no. I have observation hours on Friday for my education class. I just came from there. However, I'm running late for rehearsal. I'll see you on Monday."

"Who are you rehearsing with?"

"My band, Breaking Midnight," I answered curtly.

"I've heard of them. Jasper Whitlock, Emmett Swan and Edward Cullen. Cullen's your boyfriend?" he leered.

"Uh, yeah. Listen, I really have to go."

"Have fun at rehearsal, Isabella. Don't fall," James purred. He turned on his heel and sauntered down the hallway. I shook my head at the odd interaction I just had with the creeper, James. I hopped into the freight elevator and went to our rehearsal room. I unlocked the door and slipped inside. The guys were tuning and finishing a sound check when I came in. Edward looked up at me and smiled. He put down his guitar and enveloped me into a tight hug.

"I missed you, baby. How was Garrett?" he asked as he kissed me.

"He's fine. He wanted me to ask you if you're available for a concert on December 14th and 15th. The accompanist that he hired had a conflict and backed out."

Edward pulled out his phone and quickly checked his calendar. "That should be fine."

"Good. Here's the music," I said pulling out a large manila envelope. "I'll let him know."

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Edward took the envelope and stuck it in his bag. I lifted my own bag and dropped it on the floor. As I bent to pick up some music, I winced. I guess I fell harder than I thought.

"Are you okay, Bella?" Edward asked, his face lined with worry.

"I'll be fine. I fell on my way in here. I ran into James. I landed right on my ass," I grumbled.

"Who's James?" Emmett asked.

"Our TA for music theory. Creepy fucker, too," Edward explained. "Did he do anything?"

"No more than usual. He's just...I don't even know what to call it," I shuddered. "Come on, I'm exhausted. I'm getting a bruise on my ass and I haven't eaten dinner. Let's run these songs before I start gnawing my arm off in starvation."

"That's a visual I did not need to see," Jasper laughed.

We ran through our set of music three times. I felt more and more comfortable with the music. After rehearsal, we loaded up Emmett's truck and headed back to the dorm. I decided to go to my room and eat some Easy Mac and go to bed. Edward, of course, pouted and tried to give me the puppy dog look but I was having none of it. I was tired, sore and cranky. I needed to shower, eat and relax. I gave him a brief kiss and I went up to my room. I ate my dinner after I showered. Rosalie was at the library again and Alice was hanging with Jasper. They decided to go to Baci's and try it out. I decided to relish in the quiet. I pulled out my laptop and logged into my email. I had several new messages. There was one the perplexed me.

*To: Isabella Swan*

*From: Private*

*Re: Surprise!*

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*Dearest Bella,*

*I hope all is going well at Emerson. I've heard that you are really enjoying it there. I miss you very much, my girl. You mean so much to me. I wanted to let you know that I sent you a surprise. It should be in your mailbox at school right now. I hope you like it. I got it for you for your birthday. I'm sorry that I didn't get it to you sooner. Enjoy your surprise and I will see you soon.*

*Your Secret Admirer*

I had no idea who sent this to me. I figured I'd go and check my mailbox. I grabbed my keys and scampered to the mailroom. I unlocked my box and found a large envelope in there. I ripped open the envelope and took out its contents. There were pictures. Pictures of me and Edward. I flipped through the pictures and they were taken during the past two weeks. Each picture indicated that the photographer had gotten closer and closer. The final picture scared me. It was Edward and I walking hand in hand. His face was crossed off and had the word "dead" underneath. My face was enclosed in a heart and said "mine." I raced up the three flights of stairs to Edward's room. I frantically banged on the door. Edward opened the door and he was wearing nothing but a towel.

"Hey beautiful," he said with a smile. That smile quickly faded when he saw the panicked look on my face.

"Look!" I screamed as I shoved the pictures into his hands. He scanned the pictures and his eyes widened. Emmett had also come and peered over his shoulder. Edward got to the final picture and his face paled. Emmett roared. Edward pulled me into their room and sat me down on the couch. Emmett sat down next to me and I heard Edward putting on clothes.

Edward sat down next to me after he dressed. He was wearing some track pants and a t-shirt. "When did you get these, baby?" he asked.

"I got an email today saying I had a 'surprise' waiting for me in the mail. I went downstairs and checked my box and this was inside."

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"We've got to go to the police, Bella."

**A/N: Sorry, cliffhanger. Reviews make me resolve cliffhangers more quickly. Just kidding. They do make me happy, though! Happy New Year!**

# Police Report

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 23: Police Report

### BPOV

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*"Hey beautiful," he said with a smile. That smile quickly faded when he saw the panicked look on my face.*

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## La Cantante

*" I got an email today saying I had a 'surprise' waiting for me in the mail. I went downstairs and checked my box and this was inside."*

*" We've got to go to the police, Bella."*

### EPOV

I stared at the pictures in my hands. They were obviously taken with a telephoto lens. It was pictures of Bella and me around campus, laughing, kissing, hugging...The one picture with my face crossed off and stating "dead" scared me. Not that I feared for my own life, I feared for Bella's. I got up from the couch and gathered my keys and the pictures. I crouched in front of Bella who was sobbing against Emmett's chest.

"Bella, did you erase the email you got?" I asked.

"Nnnnnnn...no. It's still open on my laptop," she whimpered.

"Come on, beautiful. Let's get your laptop and we're going to the police. Do you have that copy of the restraining order against Jacob with you?" I continued.

"It's in my desk."

"I'm coming with you guys," Emmett said as he went to grab his jacket.

I grasped Bella's hands and helped her off the couch. She put her arms around my waist and we shuffled down to her room. Emmett was right on our heels. I sat her on her bed and shut down her computer, put it in the laptop bag and slung it over my shoulder. I also grabbed my leather jacket on her desk chair and placed it over her shoulders.

"Which drawer is the restraining order?" I asked.

"Middle one, in a manila envelope," she muttered.

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I opened the middle drawer and grabbed the envelope there. I also swiped Bella's cell phone from its charger. Emmett had given Bella some socks and shoes, as she ran up the stairs from the mailroom barefoot. She was putting them on but she looked like she was in a daze. Emmett was rubbing her shoulders, looking at her with concern etched into his normally jovial face. I gently tapped Emmett on the shoulder and nodded to the door. Emmett helped Bella off of the bed. I reached for her hand and linked my fingers with hers. We slowly walked down to the parking lot to where Bella had parked my car. I put Bella and Emmett in the backseat and slid into the driver's side. Bella curled into Emmett's side began crying hysterically. Each sob ripped through my body. It pained me to see Bella so upset and scared. There was absolutely nothing I could do about it.

I eased out of the parking lot and drove the short distance to the police station in town. I parked in a visitor's parking spot and grabbed Bella's laptop bag, the envelope and her phone. Emmett got her out of the car. As soon as she was out she wrapped her arms around my waist and squeezed very tightly. I embraced her and swayed her slowly. I wanted her to know that she was safe, protected. I wanted her to know that I would not be hurt. I wanted her to know that I loved her. I pressed a gentle kiss into her damp hair and rested my cheek on the top of her head.

"Let's go inside, beautiful."

She nodded against my chest but refused to let go of my body. We moved to the entrance of the police station. Emmett held open the door and we moved through. He walked up to the reception desk in the foyer of the station. I heard him talk to the receptionist, explaining the situation as best as he could. I just held onto Bella in the chairs in the reception area. Her small body was shaking with silent sobs of terror. She held onto me with a vice grip. After about five minutes, I heard shuffling and a short, blonde haired woman who was in her thirties approached us.

"Hello. My name is Detective Jane Raisor. If you would come back into my office, we can discuss what's been going on," she said with a tight smile. Bella pulled away and wiped her face. She got up of her own volition, but was still

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shaky on her feet. I snaked my hand around her waist and supported as we walked to Detective Raisor's office. We entered a small room with two beat-up desks. There was a man sitting at one of the desks, scribbling something down on a legal pad. "This is my partner, Detective Alec Lutz. We've been assigned to your case. Please sit down."

Bella sat and I sat down in the chairs closest to the desks. Emmett pulled up a chair from the corner.

"First off, please tell us your names and the nature of your complaint," Det. Raisor said professionally.

"I'm Isabella Marie Swan. I'm a student at Emerson University," she began. She then described her situation with Jacob and what he did to her. His controlling nature, his emotional abuse and the attempted sexual assault. As Bella told her story, Emmett was fuming next to me. He looked like he was ready to kill Jacob for what he did to his sister.

"On the first day of classes, Jacob contacting me through a text message saying I was his," Bella continued softly.

"Do you have that text message?" Det. Lutz asked.

"It was on my old phone. I've since switched carriers and got a new number," she said sadly. I reached into the laptop bag and pulled out the old phone that she had when we met.

"This is the phone she mentioned, sir," I said quietly.

"And you are?" Det. Lutz asked.

"I'm Edward Cullen. I'm also a student at Emerson University. I'm also Bella's boyfriend. This is her brother, Emmett Swan," I said gesturing to Emmett.

"Emmett McCarty Swan," he further clarified.

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Det. Lutz took Bella's old phone and plugged it into his computer. He began swiping his hands over the keys, presumably looking for the text.

"Okay, Bella. Please continue," Det. Raisor said gently.

"After I got the text message from Jacob, I contacted my father in Forks, Washington. He is the retired police chief there. I told him what happened and he managed to get me a restraining order against Jacob. He sent me a copy a couple weeks ago. However, it is only valid in the state of Washington," she added. I handed her the manila envelope with the restraining order. She gave it to Det. Raisor. She opened the envelope and quickly perused the order. She got up and went to a copy machine. She quickly copied the restraining order, placed it back into the envelope and handed it back to Bella. "As mentioned earlier, I got a new phone number that is local and unlisted. My name is not even associated with the phone. It's under Edward's name."

"That was a wise thing to do, Bella. I'm assuming that there is more to your story since you look like you've been crying," Det. Lutz said.

*No shit, Sherlock! You went to the academy to hoan your fine skills of deduction and you can tell she's been crying? The red cheeks and tear stains aren't a dead giveaway.*

Bella nodded as a tear fell down her cheek. I reached and gently rubbed it away. She rested her head against my hand and took a deep breath. "About two weeks ago, I started getting phone calls on my new number. It was a private number, so I don't know who it was. At first, I ignored it. However, they kept increasing in the frequency of calls throughout the day. The most recent one was on Saturday of last week. Edward threatened to go to the police and they abruptly stopped. I thought all of this was behind me. Until today. I got an email from a private email address saying I had a surprise sent to me. It was sent to me via regular mail. I went and got my mail and there was a large envelope filled with pictures. There were pictures of Edward and me on campus. However, the final picture in the sequence is what scares me," Bella said as she reached for the envelope. She pulled out the photos and flipped to the picture where I was "dead," and Bella was "mine."

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"Do you think that it's this Jacob?" Det. Raisor asked.

"I'm almost positive. The handwriting on the pictures looks like his," Bella said looking Det. Raisor in the eyes.

"Do you have that email printed out? And your new cell phone?" Det. Lutz asked.

Bella looked at me and I pulled out her laptop and handed it to the Detective. I also reached in my pocket and pulled out her phone and gave it to him. "Any other reason you might think it may be Jacob?" Det. Raisor pressed as Det. Lutz hooked up Bella's computer and phone to another computer in the room.

"I mentioned that the phone calls began two weeks ago. I had spoken with my father and he ran into Jacob's father at a local restaurant in Forks. Jacob was with him. He may have taken my phone number from my father's phone when he wasn't looking."

"Okay, Bella. We'll look into this. My partner is in the process of downloading your information from the computer to our hard drive so we can see if we can locate the IP address of the sender's email. We're also checking if we can get the private number. We may not be able to tell you who is calling you, but we could at least get a general location. Here's my card and my partner's card. Call us if anything else happens. We're going to keep the photos for the time being. Were you the only to touch them?" Det. Raisor asked.

"No. Edward also handled them," Bella said.

"Before you leave, we're going to print you to exclude you from the sample on the photos. Hopefully, we'll be able to figure out who sent those. It should be about a half hour to get your information onto our hard drive. Let's get you printed and then you can head back to Emerson," Det. Raisor said with a comforting smile.

She got up from her desk and led Bella and I into another room. She got a device that was plugged into the wall and brought it to us. She instructed Bella

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to put her hand on the screen of the device and it scanned her hand. She also had to put her thumb on a smaller screen on the bottom of the device. She repeated the process for her other hand and I did the same with my hands. Bella looked at Det. Raisor with a look of skepticism.

Det. Raisor laughed, "Were you expecting to get your fingers all inky?"

"Actually, yeah. Very high tech gadget you got there," Bella said warily.

"It's much more accurate the ink, trust me. Your computer and phone should be ready to go. Please don't hesitate to call me if anything else happens, okay?"

"Will you call us when you get information from the IP address and cell phone number?" I asked.

"Of course. Bella, please write down your number on this sheet and we'll call you if we find anything out," Det. Raisor said.

Bella scribbled down her number on the corner of the legal pad that Det. Raisor indicated. We walked back to her office and we saw Emmett and Det. Lutz looking at some garbled nonsense on his computer screen. Det. Lutz was running his hands over the computer, clearly looking for something. Emmett was gazing at the screen, with a look of anger. Det. Lutz was getting frustrated with whatever he was looking at. Emmett eyes widened.

"Try a recursive algorithm. That should get the IP address," Emmett said quietly.

Det. Lutz looked up at Emmett with a confused look. He then turned to his partner and she nodded for him to try it. Det. Lutz hit a few keys on the computer keyboard and garbled nonsense cleared up.

"Do you know anyone in Port Angeles? The IP address of the computer is from an internet café there," Det. Lutz said.

## La Cantante

"Jacob," Bella whispered and she collapsed into my arms. I gently laid Bella onto the hard floor of the police station. I placed her head into my lap. I looked up to Emmett and he was as white as a ghost.

I vaguely heard Det. Raisor on the phone, talking to someone. I was too worried about Bella. Her skin was very pale and clammy. Her breaths were shallow. I gently pushed her hair from her face and I felt tears prick my eyes. She looked so fragile, so tiny.

Det. Raisor knelt on the floor next to me and pressed her fingers to Bella's neck. She then got up and rummaged through her desk. She returned with a small bottle. She removed the lid and waved it under Bella's nose. Bella started coughing at the pungent smell. Her eyes fluttered open and I gently rested my palm against her cold, clammy cheek. When she finally opened her eyes fully, they were glazed over and not focused on anything. I maneuvered my body so I could look directly at her.

"Bella, baby. It's Edward. You're okay," I whispered softly. "Look at me, beautiful."

She blinked her eyes a few times and they eventually focused on mine. "Is this a nightmare?" she croaked.

"No, baby. You're awake," I said sadly.

Det. Raisor had left the room as Bella was waking up. She returned with some orange juice and a large cookie. "Sit her up, Edward," she said brusquely.

I helped Bella sit up and I settled myself behind her on the floor. Det. Raisor handed her the orange juice and the cookie. "Eat this, sweetheart. It'll get your blood sugar back up," Det. Raisor said as she tucked a hair behind Bella's ear. Bella took a tentative sip of the orange juice and nibbled on the cookie. Det. Raisor went back to her desk and pressed some numbers. I heard her talk on the phone in hushed tones.

## La Cantante

Emmett had joined us on the floor and was rubbing Bella's leg. I tenderly rubbed Bella's arms and pressed kisses into her hair and nuzzled her neck. With each sip of her orange juice and nibble of her cookie, she seemed to get a bit stronger. She was not leaning against me as much. She finished the cookie and turned to me, "Can we please get off of the floor? Remember I fell on my ass earlier."

"There's my Isabelly! Back to her smart-ass self!" Emmett said with a sad smile. He scrambled up and held out his hands for Bella. She reached up and he pulled her up. He enveloped her into a warm hug. I got up from my spot on the floor, dusted off my pants and watched Bella and Emmett. Emmett raised his head from Bella's head and grabbed my arm. He pulled me into the embrace as well. He turned his head and whispered in my ear, "You're a good man, Cullen. Thank you for being with my sister. I look forward to having you as a brother."

"Em, I can't breathe," Bella mumbled.

"Sorry, Isabelly," he said as he released us both.

"Are we free to go, Det. Raisor?" I asked.

She was still on the phone. She held up one finger, indicating for us to wait. I intertwined my fingers with Bella's. I really wanted to get out of there. Bella needed to rest. She needed something more in her besides a cookie and some orange juice. Det. Raisor finished her phone call and hung up.

"I was on the phone with the District Attorney. They are going to contact the local District Attorney in Port Angeles to get a warrant for the list of users at the internet café. Hopefully, we'll be able to put this bed quickly. Thank you for your help, Mr. Swan. We'll call you with any further information. I hope things improve for you Bella."

"Thank you Det. Raisor. We're good to go?"



## La Cantante

"Yes, you are. We'll be in touch," Det. Raisor said as she extended her hand to Bella. She shook it and turned to face me. "Home?"

"Your wish is my command," I said. I reached into my pocket and tossed my keys to Emmett. He was getting Bella's computer, phone and laptop bag.

"You're driving, Swan. I got to make sure that Bella is okay. I am a pre-med major after all," I said with a wink.

Emmett took the keys and we headed out of the police station. We all clambered into the car. Emmet was in the driver's seat, Bella and I were in the back. She laid down across the back seat and put her head in my lap. I ran my fingers through her hair as we drove back to campus. Bella must have fell asleep as soon as her head was on my lap. She was dead to the world. I didn't want to wake her when we got back to the dorm. Emmett parked the car and he looked back at us. He had a wistful smile on his face. I slipped my legs out from Bella's head and ran to the other side of the car. I reached in and gently picked Bella up. She buried her head into the crook of my neck and I carried her up to her room. Emmett followed us with Bella's computer and phone. He unlocked her door and I saw that Jasper and Alice were in the room watching a movie. Alice jumped up when she saw Bella's sleeping form in my arms. I walked over to her bed, Alice had thrown back her covers, and placed her into her bed. I sat down and removed her shoes from her feet. I covered her with her quilt and she curled up.

I nodded to Alice and Jasper to join Emmett and me in the hallway. We told them what had happened. Alice started crying and Jasper, who is normally very calm and collected, punched the wall. We were telling them about the internet café, when I heard a blood curdling scream come from Bella and Alice's room. I ran back into the room and saw Bella thrashing in her bed, tears running down her face. I knelt next to her bed. Alice, Jasper and Emmett were on my heels.

"Bella! Bella, wake up, baby! You're dreaming!" I said forcefully. I ran my hands up and down her arms and tried to rouse her from her nightmare. "Bella. Please!"

## La Cantante

Her eyes flicked up and they were crazed, filled with tears. She sat up in the bed and began frantically looking around. Her eyes finally settled on me and she roughly grabbed my face. "You're alive," she whispered.

"I'm not going anywhere, beautiful," I said reverently. "It was just a dream. He can't hurt you. We won't let him."

"If we see that fucker, he's a dead man, Bella," Jasper hissed.

"He won't know what hit him," Emmett growled.

"I'll pummel him with a stiletto, Bella," Alice chimed in.

"See? Jacob doesn't stand a chance. Alice is brutal with her stiletto attacks," I joked.

Bella smiled sadly. Her eyelids drooped. She was exhausted. "Can you stay with me, Edward?" she pleaded.

"Of course, beautiful." I slipped off my fleece and put it on her desk chair. Emmet, Jasper and Alice had left the room and I assumed they went upstairs to our room. I took off my shoes and got in between the covers. Bella nestled herself to my body, trying to get as close as possible. I wrapped my arms around her and squeezed.

"I'm so scared, Edward. What if he finds me? What if tries to make me his? What if he hurts you?" she cried.

"Bella, I will do everything in my power to make sure that you are safe. He can't hurt me. He's in Washington," I reasoned.

"He could fly here and hurt you. Edward, he's huge. As tall as Emmett and just as strong, possibly stronger. He could...kill you," she said softly.

"Never gonna happen. Bella, we'll be fine. However, I do not want you walking around campus by yourself. Always have someone with you. Just as a

precaution, please?"

She nodded and burrowed herself deeper against my chest. "I love you, Edward. I don't know what I would have done without you today."

"I love you more, beautiful. We will get through this. Jacob will get he deserves."

Bella let out a huge yawn. "Go to sleep, beautiful. You need your rest." She nodded and I felt her body become heavier on mine. Within minutes, her breath had evened out and she was asleep. I ran my hand up and down her back. I hummed her lullaby until my eyelids started to droop. With a final kiss to her forehead, I finally let sleep overcome me.

**A/N: Okay. I'm not a lawyer, police officer or IT person. I am a music teacher. I'm not sure if this is the correct way to handle the police station situation. All of my knowledge of this stuff is from Law and Order or CSI. It's probably not correct, but it's fiction. I took some creative license. Please leave a review. They make me smile :) .**

# Aftermath

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 24: Aftermath

### BPOV

It was official. I hated Jacob Black. He was an evil, sadistic motherfucker. He is the epitome of pure evil and cruelty. Will he never get it through his head that I didn't want him? I would never want him. I hated what I was when I was with him. I hated what he did to me. I hated what he is still capable of doing to me. Hopefully, this new evidence will finally put him behind bars, where he belongs. I was such an idiot in refusing press charges against him originally. I should have seen what he was capable of when he tried to attack me. I hated him. If there was an emotion that was more than hate, I would probably feel that, too.

Edward spent the night with me after I filed the police report against the mystery stalker. I could tell the detectives were hesitant to think it was Jacob until they had concrete evidence. I knew in my heart it was him. When I woke up the next morning, I was still snuggled in Edward's arms. I looked up at his face and I saw tear stains on his cheeks. He had been crying. I hated that my pain caused Edward this anguish. It made me hate Jacob more.

When Edward finally woke up, he was insistent that I was never alone. He waited to shower until after Rose returned from her workout. He never left my side the entire weekend. We spent Saturday night in his room. On Sunday, we hung out in my dorm room with Alice and Rose. They agreed with Edward that I shouldn't be alone. I hated that Jacob was still controlling my life, even if it was through the protectiveness of my friends. It continued for the rest of the

## La Cantante

week. I was never alone. Someone was always with me. Most of the times it was Edward. The rest of the times it was my roommates or Jasper or Emmett. I was going bat-shit crazy. Who would have thought me, the shy girl who lived in solitude, would go crazy over people fawning over her? Yeah. I was ready to scream.

I had called both Charlie and Renee during the week and told them what happened. They also agreed with Edward. At this rate, I would never get a moment to myself. I'm surprised that I was able to shower and go to the bathroom on my own. If Edward had his way, he'd be in there with me.

On Friday, Edward went with me for my observation hours with Garrett. We left after his biochemistry class like the first day I went. Edward also insisted that we spend the weekend at his parents' house. They were gone at a medical conference, so we would have the entire weekend to ourselves. As we drove to Edward's alma mater, I was contemplating the recent occurrences. I let out a deep breath.

"What's wrong, beautiful?" Edward asked with a sad smile.

"I hate him," I replied.

"Jacob?"

"Yes. I hate him with every fiber of my being. I hate the control he is still instilling in my life even when he's not here. I hate the fact that I have to be 'babysat' because you're afraid of me being alone. I hate this whole situation," I said angrily.

"You understand why we don't want you alone, right Bella?" Edward asked thoughtfully.

"Yes, I get it. Doesn't mean I have to like it," I mumbled. "In high school, I was so used to being by myself. I had a few friends, but I was alone most of the time. This is just stifling me right now."

## La Cantante

"I'm so sorry, beautiful. I can understand why it would upset you. We all love you so much and we want to make sure that you're safe," Edward said, his mouth turned to a frown.

"Maybe he should just get me and all of this would end," I muttered quietly.

I felt the car swerve and Edward slammed on the breaks. He threw the car into park and glared at me. "What did you just say?" he roared.

"Nothing. I'm just frustrated. I was feeling sorry for myself," I said, shrinking back into the car door.

"Isabella, you mean entirely way too much to me, too much to your family, too much to our roommates for you to ever think that. This whole situation sucks! I get it. I hate it as much as you do. I miss my fun-loving, beautiful girlfriend. I miss the light-hearted times we had. This past week, you've been a shell of yourself. This whole thing has put a dark cloud over us. I fucking hate it. I fucking hate him for doing this to you. I wish I could just shield you from this bullshit, take you away and forget it all ever happened. I can't. I wish I could, but I can't. You can't say things like that when you have so many people who love you," he cried as he ran his hands through his hair. Edward punched the steering wheel of his car and then rested his head on it. He took a few breaths and turned back to me. He had calmed down. "Do you need to go to see Garrett today? Can you make it up by going next week?"

"I think in light of what's going on, I wouldn't mind not going. Let me give him a call," I replied quietly. I pulled my cell phone out of my bag and found Garrett's number. He picked up on the second ring.

"Hey Garrett. It's Bella," I said quietly.

"Hi, Bella. How are you doing?" he asked cheerily.

"Honestly, not so good. I had a bit of a traumatic week this past week. I was on my way to come work with you and I'm just not feeling very well," I explained.

## La Cantante

"Oh my goodness! What happened?" Garrett asked.

"My ex-boyfriend is stalking me and menacing the people who are close to me. He actually sent me some pictures, threatening to kill Edward. I thought I could come today, but I just can't. I'm sorry, Garrett," I mumbled.

"Bella, don't apologize. This is a shitty situation. I completely understand. Hell, I'll still count the hours. I'll sign off on them when I see you next week, okay?"

"Thanks, Garrett. I truly appreciate it. I'll see you next week."

"Keep your head up, kiddo. Your ex is an asshat," Garrett said comfortingly.

"Bye." I clicked to end the call. I turned my body and looked at Edward. He gave me a genuine smile, the first all week long. He tentatively reached across the console and brushed my hair back from my face.

"I'm sorry I yelled, beautiful," he said gently. "I'm frustrated as you are. Do you still want to spend the weekend at my parents' house?"

"Yeah," I sighed. "It'll be nice to be away from the dorms and all of the hovering."

"Okay. I need to swing by the grocery store to pick up some necessities for the weekend. I was going to do it while you worked with Garrett, but now you get to come with me."

Edward started the car and eased back into traffic. We drove about twenty minutes and pulled in front of a Super Target. We both got out of the car and headed into the store. Edward grabbed a cart and we went to the grocery part of the massive store.

"What do you need to get, Edward?" I asked as we walked through the produce section.

## La Cantante

"Just food for us for the weekend. Anything you have a taste for?" he asked sweetly.

I gave him a wide smile and then proceeded to get the fixings for my chili, chicken parmesan, chopped salad, rum cake, omelets and pancakes. Edward's eyes bugged out his head when he watched me go through the store. After I got all the necessary ingredients, we went up to check out. Edward paid for our groceries and we loaded them into the trunk of his car. We rode to his parents' house in silence. He held my hand as we sped along the highway. He pulled into the twisting driveway and parked his car in the garage. He gathered our bags and ran them up to his room. I began taking out the groceries and putting them on the island of the kitchen. I didn't know where anything went and I didn't want to presume to put anything away without Edward's guidance. However, he didn't really seem like he knew his way around the kitchen, except to eat. I was almost finished with unloading the groceries when he came back downstairs. He gave me a frown as he saw me walk in with the shopping bags of food.

"Bella, I could have gotten those," he admonished.

"I'm not made of tissue paper. I'm perfectly capable of getting groceries out a car. I've been doing it for years. I cook for my dad and Emmett whenever I'm home. It's not a big deal," I said as I laid the bags on the counter.

"I want to spoil you this weekend, beautiful. You shouldn't have to lift a finger," he said as he pulled me into a tight embrace.

"And what would we be eating, Cullen?" I asked as I kissed his nose.

"Each other," he purred.

"You're quite delicious, Edward, but I don't think I could survive on your spooge alone," I teased.

Edward's jaw dropped in shock. He pulled away and shook his head, "I can't believe you just said that! You've been hanging out with Alice too long."



## La Cantante

"Seriously, what would we have eaten if I hadn't jumped in at the store?" I asked.

"Umm, chicken fingers and frozen pizza?" he said, with an adorable grimace.

"Sounds fantastic, Edward. You're a gourmet cook," I said sarcastically. "At least, we'll eat somewhat healthily this weekend. Men!"

"Excuse me for my lack of cooking abilities," he pouted.

"Can you show me where these things go? Then I can start the chili and we can take a catnap. I'm exhausted. I've been sleeping like crap," I said as I gestured to the bags of groceries. Edward quickly went to work and put the food away. I asked him to show me where a few things were in the kitchen. He plopped down in a stool by the island. I put him to work in cutting up some peppers. He had the cutest look of concentration as he cut the veggies. I pulled out a large pot and began browning the meat for the chili. When it was cooked to my specifications, I put in the rest of the ingredients, lowered the heat and covered it with a lid. It needed to simmer for at least four hours before it was ready to eat. Before we went upstairs to nap, I grabbed a box of pasta from the pantry and placed it by the stove along with a medium sized sauce pan.

We climbed the stairs to his room and I went to my duffle bag to pull out some more comfortable clothes. I was still in my 'professional attire' for observations. I dashed into the bathroom and pulled on my jeans and a dark pink sweater. I took out my contacts and threw on my glasses. I walked out to see Edward laying on his bed, his shirt off, fussing with his phone. I picked up my phone and set my alarm for a little after five. It was two now. I took off my glasses and crawled into bed with Edward. I curled up against him, with my back to him. He put his one arm under my head and the other around my waist and pulled me close to his body. I pressed a kiss to his strong bicep before shutting my eyes.

"I love you, Isabella," he said as he kissed my hair.

"I love you too, Edward," I mumbled as I drifted to sleep.

xx LC xx

For the first time in a week, I slept without a nightmare. When the alarm on my phone went off, I didn't want to get up. I was happy in my love's arms. I felt safe and content. I groaned and I reached for my phone to turn off the alarm. I began to move my body to get out of bed. Edward's arm tightened around my waist.

"Where are you going?" he mumbled sleepily.

"I have to pee. If you keep squeezing, I'm going to wet the bed," I replied.

"Fine, go pee," he said, relinquishing his hold on me. He rolled over onto his stomach and pulled a pillow over his head. I put on my glasses and I padded to his bathroom and took care of business. I ran a brush through my hair, tossing it into a messy bun. I also grabbed my toothbrush and quickly brushed my teeth. I walked back out into Edward's bedroom and he was snoring on his bed, curled up in a fetal position, holding my pillow.

*He's so sweet. I'm such a bitch for snapping at him today. You're going to fuck this up, Swan. Get your act together.*

I crawled back onto the bed and kissed him on his forehead. I turned and went downstairs to make a salad and cook the pasta for dinner. I rooted around the kitchen and found the salad bowl from the last time I was at Edward's home. I quickly put the ingredients for the salad into the bowl. I was looking for some salad dressing when I found some feta cheese crumbles. I added them to the salad. However, I couldn't find any salad dressing so I decided to make my own. I added some olive oil and balsamic vinegar to the salad, along with salt, pepper and garlic. I mixed the salad and it tasted pretty damn good. I put the salad on the kitchen table. I then began the noodles. As I was waiting for the water to boil, I pulled a strainer out of one of the cabinets and set the table. I made the noodles and poured them back into the pan I cooked them. I spooned some of the chili into the noodles. Edward strolled in, wearing a hoodie, as I was doing my final taste test of my chili. He was scratching his stomach and stretching as he was walking in. He looked quite adorable, and still incredibly

sleepy.

"Smells fantastic, Bella," he said groggily.

"I was just going to come and get you. Seeing as you are down here, grab a bowl and dig in," I said with a smile. He padded to the kitchen table and grabbed both bowls that I had put out for us. He spooned some pasta and then put a heaping ladleful of chili onto the noodles. He put his bowl down onto the table and walked to the refrigerator. He looked around and grabbed a package of cheddar cheese. I made my own plate and sat down at the table.

"Do you want anything to drink, beautiful?" he asked with a smile.

"Water's fine." He grabbed to bottles of water and plopped down.

"Thank you for making dinner, beautiful," Edward said as he leaned in to kiss me.

"You're welcome. I hope you like it. It's a bit spicy. Charlie and Emmett really like spicy stuff," I said with a blush covering my cheeks.

"It's probably delicious, Bella." He put a layer of cheddar cheese on top. He handed me the bag and I did the same. He picked up the fork and tucked into his chili. He groaned as he swallowed his first bite. "This is the best chili I've had, hands down. Is there nothing you can't do? You're an amazingly talented singer, incredibly gorgeous, extremely intelligent and you can cook? You are truly the most perfect woman, ever."

"I take it you like it?" I teased

"I love it! Absolutely luscious," he breathed.

"Good. I made enough for your parents as well. It'll need to be frozen, but there should be some for at least four or five meals for the two of them."

## La Cantante

"Okay, my mom already loves and now you're cooking for her? She'll want to adopt you," Edward said between bites.

"That would be too bizarre. You'd be dating your sister," I giggled.

He scrunched his nose at the thought. "Ew. You're right. I guess I'll just have to marry you to make you her daughter. No ickyness there," Edward reasoned.

We continued our meal in a comfortable silence. Edward starting groaning again when he ate the salad. I guess it's true what they say, the way to a man's heart is through his stomach. I began clearing the table and he batted my hands away. He said that I cooked, he'll do the dishes. I relented. However, I wanted to put away the food. I put the pasta and a little bit of the chili into a medium sized container. I then created smaller meals for Esme and Carlisle. After I made their meals, Edward brought them down to the basement and put them into the freezer there. Edward shooed me out of the kitchen and put me in the family room. He told me to pick out a movie and we'd watch it after he finished the dishes. I perused the massive movie collection that was there. I found the movie I wanted to see and opened it. It was empty. I furrowed my brows. I guess we won't be watching that. I grabbed another movie that caught my eye and I opened that as well. That movie was empty too. I walked to the kitchen and held up the movie cases.

"Edward, I went to go set up the movie and there's nothing in the cases," I said, with a confused expression on my face.

"Oh, we have a special entertainment center. All of our DVDs are located there. What do you want to watch?" he asked as he finished putting the stock pot back under the island.

"*Shawshank Redemption*," I said.

"You got it," he said as he wiped his hands on a dishtowel. He walked to me and linked his fingers with mine. We headed back into the family room. He turned on the massive television and using this large touch screen remote selected the movie we wanted to see. "Do you want some popcorn or junk

food?"

"I'm quite full from dinner," I said patting my belly. Edward pressed a few more buttons and the lights in the room faded down until they were almost out. The room was very dark, save for the glow of the television screen. He sat down on the couch. I lay down and placed my head in his lap. We settled in to watch the movie. He idly played with my hair and scratched my back as we watched Andy and Red and their story in the corrupt prison of Shawshank.

"I really love this movie," I said quietly.

"It was really good. I'd never seen it before," Edward replied.

I looked up at him from his lap, "Really?"

"I'm partial to action movies. I can see why you liked this one, though," he said as he trace the curve my jaw.

"Why do you think I like it?" I asked.

"All of the details. You need to see all of the details to enjoy it. You have this unique ability to take all of the details and see the bigger picture. That's what makes you such a great musician and conductor."

"I had never thought of that," I mused. I yawned but tried to hide it. Edward snickered.

"We took a three hour long nap and you're still tired?" he laughed.

"Shut it. Like I said earlier, I've been sleeping like crap," I grumbled.

"Come on, beautiful. You need your rest. I don't want you getting sick," he said as he kissed my nose. He began shutting off the television. I sat up and rolled my head, to loosen the knots in my neck from laying on Edward's lap for so long. I swung my legs off of the couch. Edward was in front of me with his hands out. I took them and he lifted me. He then bent down and flipped me

over his shoulder.

"Edward Anthony Masen Cullen! Put me down!" I squealed.

"Oooh, all four names. I'm shaking in my Chucks," he chortled. He walked me to the stairs and I began smacking him in the ass.

"Edward! Seriously! Put me down! All the blood is rushing to my head!"

"Nope." He took the stairs, two at a time, moving with ease. It was almost like he didn't have another person hanging over his body. I then remembered something. I waited until we got up the stairs. I reached up to his sides of body. "Bella...don't tickle me."

*Too late!*

I attacked his sides with my fingers. He faltered with me and put me down. I still continued my tickle assault on his ribs. "Bella! Stop!" he laughed. He took off like a bullet to his room and I was on his heels. He dashed into his room and I followed. I ran in and I didn't see him.

"Edward?" I giggled. "Where are you?"

I heard the door close and lock flick. I turned around and I saw Edward standing by his door, with his arms crossed over his body and one his fingers tapping his lips. "That wasn't very nice, Isabella," he said seductively. He sauntered to where I was standing. "Whatever shall I do with you?"

"I'm sorry, Edward," I said quietly.

*Was he really mad at me?*

He slowly circled me and stopped behind me. He was so close, I could feel him breathing against my ear. "Close your eyes, Isabella," he said firmly.

"Why?" I asked as I turned to face him. He stopped me.

## La Cantante

"Close your eyes and don't move, Isabella," he purred in my ear. I hesitantly closed my eyes. I felt him move away from me and I heard some drawers open and close. I felt him move back to me, as I smelled his cologne. "Do you trust me, Isabella?"

"Yes, Edward," I breathed.

"Keep your eyes closed." I felt Edward remove my glasses and place them on the bedside table. I then felt some cool silk cover my eyes. The silk was tightened around my head. Edward took both of my hands and led me into the room. "Turn around, Isabella."

I slowly turned my body and Edward stopped me where he wanted me. "Don't move, Isabella. I'll be right back."

I heard some rustling and a door open. My heart was stammering in my chest and my breath was coming in erratic spurts.

*This is so hot!*

The door clicked shut and Edward returned to me. He ran his hands up and down my arms. "This will only work if you trust me. If you are not comfortable, I want you to let me know, Isabella. I'm going to ask you again. Do you trust me?"

"With my life, Edward."

"Good girl," he cooed as he nuzzled my neck. "There's only one rule in this game. You can't touch me. I can touch you, but you cannot touch me unless given permission. Do you understand?"

"Yes. Yes, I understand," I breathed.

"Excellent."

## La Cantante

Edward ran his fingers across my cheeks, down the curve of my neck and along the sides of my torso. He reached the hem of my shirt and he pulled it up and off of my body. He walked closer to me and I could feel that he had removed his hoodie and was bare-chested. His hands moved across my skin, lightly kneading my shoulders, caressing the tops of my breasts and scratching up and down my back.

"You are exquisite, Isabella. Your skin is translucent. When you blush, your whole body turns pink. It is so beautiful," he purred in my ear. He then nipped at my ear lobe. He kissed along the column of my neck. His hands were splayed on my belly as he moved behind me. His hands slowly moved up my stomach and rested on my breasts. He continued kissing and sucking along my neck. He pushed up my bra so my breasts were released from the cups. His fingers rolled my nipples and my back arched. I reached my hands back and immediately his hands pulled away.

"What did I say, Isabella?" he warned.

"That I can't touch you," I replied quietly.

"Do that again and I will stop," he said forcefully. "Do you understand?"

"I understand."

He returned to his spot behind me. He unclasped my bra and began his assault on my breasts with his hands. He moved his hands and moved to my hips. Edward began to pull me backward. He shifted and I felt the bed behind my knees. I was still blindfolded, but I had an idea where I was in the room.

"Lay back on the bed, Isabella," he cooed. "Put your arms above your head."

I felt behind me to the bed and I sat down. I then lay back with my arms resting above my head. Edward climbed onto the bed and was straddling my waist. I heard some more rustling and felt a smooth cord go around my wrists. Edward tied it loosely to my hands.



*Is it wrong that I find this to be so erotic? Holy fuck!*

Edward leaned down and I could smell him. I could feel him breathing. He was close to my face. He ran his nose through my hair, nuzzling me. His hands ghosted down my arms, over my breasts and to my sides. He then leaned on his hands and he was off of me. I then felt his warm lips press to my stomach. He kissed and nibbled along the waistband of my jeans. He licked my navel and my hips bucked at the sensation. One of his hands went to my breasts and he rolled the nipple. He moved up and his mouth went to my other breast. I was moving and squirming under his expert touch. I moaned and wanted to run my hands through his hair, to bring his face to kiss me.

"Edward, please," I begged.

"Please, what? Isabella, what do you want?" he asked against my chest.

"To touch you. To feel you. Please, Edward," I pleaded.

"All in good time, Isabella. I'm not through with you yet," he murmured. He kissed back down my stomach and torso. He reached with his hands and undid the button of my jeans. He slowly undid my fly and pulled my jeans down. He barely pulled them past my hips when he licked from hipbone to hipbone. He nuzzled his nose close to my skin. "You smell divine, Isabella. I can hardly wait to taste you."

He gently tugged on my jeans until they were completely off. I was naked save for a pair of bright pink lacy boyshorts. I was rubbing my thighs together to create some sort of friction. I heard Edward chuckle. "Anxious are we?"

"Oh, God, Edward," I moaned.

He pulled down my panties and moved my thighs apart. He leaned in and bit down on the same spot that he marked me on my inner thigh. "You are so wet for me, Isabella. So ready for me. What do you want?"

"For you to touch me," I cried.

## La Cantante

"With pleasure, Isabella," he purred. I felt him lean in and blow lightly on the apex of my thighs. I rolled my hips at the sensation. Edward then reached up with his fingers and lightly flicked my clit. I screamed. "So loud, Isabella. I don't know if I can control myself if you scream like that with one touch."

"Please, Edward."

He leaned in and he pressed his lips to my core. His tongue swirled around my clit and he spread my legs with his hands. I bucked my hips and moaned at his touch. He drew my clit into his mouth and nibbled lightly. He pulled away slightly and he ran his hand up and down the length of my core. He then took a long finger and pushed it inside of me.

"Oh, God, Isabella. You are so tight. You are so close," he murmured against my thigh. Edward leaned back in and began licking my nub furiously and pumping his finger into me. He added a second finger and I could feel my stomach begin to coil.

"I want to feel you come around my fingers, Isabella. I want to hear you scream," Edward growled. My breathing became more and more erratic. I strained against my hold. My hips were moving at a furious pace as was Edward's fingers. He suckled on my clit and licked it. The coil in my belly was delightfully close to release. "Let go, Isabella." He bit down on my clit and added a third finger and I let out a guttural scream. The coil released and my whole body spasmed. My back arched off of the bed and Edward continued to lick as I rode out my orgasm. He withdrew his fingers and he pressed a kiss to my thighs and moved to my belly. He slowly and languidly touched and kissed my body until he reached my hands and face. He first released the tie on my hands. I lowered my arms. He then removed the blindfold and I blinked to try and focus my eyes.

Edward leaned down and pressed a chaste kiss to my lips. "I love you, Bella. I love you so much."

"Bella is not here right now. She's coming off of the most amazing orgasm ever. Please leave a message after the beep," I teased, using his words from

before.

Edward pulled away and rolled his eyes. I could feel him strain against his jeans. I reached down to his belt and he pulled away. "Nuh-uh. Tonight was all about you. My goal was to give you an earth shattering orgasm and I've succeeded."

"You've got to be uncomfortable," I chided.

"I'll manage. I wanted to make you feel amazing and that scream proves to me that I did."

"I love you, Edward. Thank you," I said as I scrambled under the covers. Edward removed his jeans and did the same. "Though, I do have a question. Why did you not want me to touch you?"

"If you did, I'd probably lose control. Your touch ignites a fire in me that is very hard to extinguish. Your fingertips, your kisses, your caresses all push me to the limit. I know you want to wait before we make love and if I did what I just did to you and allowed you to touch me? You'd no longer be a virgin," he said sheepishly.

"I'm going to let you in a little secret, Edward. 'When' is coming soon. I've made reservations after our gig at The Chapel on Homecoming weekend at this bed and breakfast outside of town. I was almost tempted to have 'when' be tonight, but I'm certain it's happening next weekend."

His eyes widened and he pulled me close. He peppered kisses along my jaw, my cheeks, my nose and ended up on my lips. "I love you so much Isabella Marie Swan."

"I love you too, Edward Anthony Masen Cullen."

He gathered me in his arms and held me tightly. I pressed a kiss to his chest and snaked my arms around his body. In his arms, I felt truly loved, truly safe. I felt like I was home.

## La Cantante

**A/N: A fun little lemon. I was a bit nervous writing this one. Let me know what you think!**

# A Major Switch

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 25: A Major Switch

### BPOV

It was early. Very early. I could see the light come through Edward's windows. It was just after 6:30 and I was watching the beautiful man curled up next to me. I was still reeling after what happened last night. It was insanely hot. My body was still tingling at the feelings Edward gave me with his touch. We had fallen asleep after that amazing experience. I had gotten up to go to the bathroom, realizing that I was still naked. I had found a t-shirt in one of the drawers of his dresser and slipped it on along with a fresh pair of panties.

I gazed at his body and my mouth watered at the beauty that was Edward. I leaned forward and kissed the crook of his neck, lightly nibbling his earlobe. Edward hummed. My lips tingled as I pressed them to his skin. His scruff tickled my cheek. I slowly glided my hands down his body, tracing each muscle and curve of his body. I saw his hips move in a delightful way and his cock spring to life.

*It's time for payback, Edward. My turn to play.*

I scooted closer to Edward and pressed my body to his. I reached my hands up and ran my fingers through his silky, copper locks. I lightly scratched his scalp with my fingertips and moved my body languidly against his. A moan escaped his lips. He snaked his hands around my waist and held me tighter against his body. I moved my lips to his ear, "I have one rule, Edward. You can't touch me. Arms above your head," I cooed.

Edward's eyes snapped open and they were darkened with desire. He still had his arms around my body. I decided to take the initiative and I pushed his shoulder and straddled his waist. "Arms above your head. Do it now, Cullen," I demanded huskily. He tentatively raised his arms and put them on the pillows behind his head. I had the blindfold that was used on my eyes last night in my hands. I reached up and tied his wrists together. "Turnabout's fair play, Mr. Cullen. You're mine."

"God, Bella. Yours completely," he groaned.

I stay perched on his body. I brought my finger to my lips and tapped it, thinking about what to do.

*You know what you want, Swan. You're just making him sweat.*

As I sat on Edward's lap, I rotated my hips and he moaned. I could feel him get harder, straining against his boxers. I leaned down and stopped my face inches from his lips. "Mine. I'm going to make you feel so good Edward." I ghosted my hands down his arms, over his broad shoulders. His hands pulled at the tie at his wrist. "You don't like not being able to touch me, do you?"

"No, Bella. I don't," he rasped.

"Trust me, Edward. You'll enjoy what I have planned for you," I said as I kissed his jaw. I pulled his earlobe into my mouth and sucked on it, drawing it into my teeth. Edward's hips bucked at the sensation. "What do you want, Edward?"

"You, Bella. Only you. I love you," he breathed.

"You'll get me. I promise. I will be yours as you will be mine," I said kissing down his chest. I sat back up and pulled the t-shirt off of my body and I brought my hands to my own chest. I began fondling my own breasts, twisting and playing with my nipples.

## La Cantante

*Who are you and what you have you done with Bella? Since when have I turned into a sex goddess?*

Edward's mouth opened and his breath came in irregular puffs. "Christ, Bella. You are so fucking sexy!"

"Do you like this, Edward? How about this?" I said as I moved one of my hands down my belly and slipped inside my panties. His eyes widened and he was squirming underneath me.

"Fuck!"

I pulled my hand from my underwear and Edward's mouth frowned slightly. I got up off his lap and slipped my panties off. After I removed my underwear, I slid body back over his. I leaned down and kissed his neck, sucking just below his ear. He threw his head back and moaned. I leaned back and swirled my hips of his erection.

"If you could touch me, Edward, what would you do? I'll do everything you say," I purred.

"Holy shit, Bella. I...I...don't...know...fuck!" he stammered.

"Would you do this, baby?" I brought my hands back to my chest and fondled my breasts again. I threw my head back and arched my back as I squeezed my nipples. Edward moaned and his legs were thrashing beneath me. I looked back at him and locked my brown eyes with his green and I lowered my hand to my core. "How about this, baby?"

I slipped my hands between my legs and I gently rolled my clit with my fingers. "Is this turning you on, Edward? Do you like when I play with myself?" I murmured.

He grunted. "I want to see you, beautiful. I want to see you come," he croaked. I got off his lap and I sat next to him with my legs spread. I licked my fingers and I moved them back to my heated core. Edward watched with rapt attention

## La Cantante

as I moved them up and down my slick folds. "That feels so good, Edward. I bet you want to do that."

"So badly," he said as he sat up. He brought his arms down and tried to touch me.

"Remember what I said, Edward. You can't touch me. If you touch me, I'll stop," I said, echoing his words from the previous evening. "Just watch, baby."

I continued my ministrations with my fingers on my clit. Edward was trembling. I slipped a finger into my body and I could feel how aroused I was. "I'm so wet for you, Edward. Only you do that to me." I reached down with my other hand and pinched my clit as I pumped into my moist heat. My own breathing became labored as I could feel my body tense. I pulled my hand away and licked my fingers again before I continued my assault on my clit. I moved my fingers quickly over the sensitive nub and pumped with my other hand, adding a second finger. Edward had released his own hands and slipped them into his boxers and I could see him rub his cock. He quickly pulled off his boxers and I could see how aroused he was.

I moved my hands quickly and my release was coming. The coil in my belly was so tight, ready to spring. "Oh, god! Edward!" I screamed as my body tensed and I orgasmed. I felt my muscles clamp down on my own fingers.

I pulled my fingers away from my body and gave Edward a smirk. My body was slowly coming down from the self-induced orgasm. My fingers were still wet from my own juices. I took my hand and placed it on his cock. Edward stopped his pumping and removed his hands.

"Christ, Bella."

I pumped his huge cock with my hands, using the lubrication from my own orgasm. I flicked my wrist and tightened my hold. I leaned down and swirled my tongue over the head of his penis. He fell back into the pillows and ran his hands through his hair. In my mind, I wanted to straddle him and impale myself on his cock, but that would have to wait. I would settle for giving him



the best head imaginable.

"I so want you to bury you cock in me, Edward," I purred as I licked and kissed up and down his shaft.

"Don't tempt me, beautiful. Seeing what you just did and what you are doing now, I'm fighting not doing just that," he said, his voice strained.

I pulled him into my mouth, until the tip of his cock hit the back of my throat. I relaxed my jaw and throat muscles and eased him in a bit deeper. I slowly bobbed my head, in conjunction with the rhythm of his hips. I added my hands to his pleasure and I could hear him grunting.

"Bella, baby! You make me feel so good. Don't stop," he cried. I increased my speed and the pressure that I put on his cock. His hips began to lose their rhythm and his breath was coming in pants. I dragged my teeth along his dick and that was his undoing. He came, sending a stream of hot jizz down my throat. I kept pumping and drank up all he gave me. When he was finished, I released his cock with a 'pop.'

"Yum. An Edward popsicle," I said as I laid my head on his muscled stomach.

"I so can't wait until 'when,' baby," he breathed.

"Next week, handsome. Next week and I'll be yours completely," I said with a seductive grin.

He reached his arms around me and pulled me up to his face. He peppered kisses along my cheeks, forehead, and nose and ended with a searing kiss to my lips. "I. Love. You. So. Much," he said punctuating each word with a kiss to my lips.

"I'm going to hop in the shower. Care to join me, handsome?"

"Hell yeah, beautiful!" he said as he scooped me up and threw me over his shoulder. I smacked his ass as we walked to the bathroom.

## La Cantante

*He's mine.*

xx LC xx

After some more sexy time in the shower, we ambled down to the kitchen. I made my famous blueberry pancakes. Edward was making noises that should be reserved for the bedroom. He told me that I was the best cook, ever. I giggled at his admission. After breakfast, Edward took me to the field behind his house. We brought a small picnic and our homework.

We sat in the cool, late September air and enjoyed being with each other. I read some more chapters for psychology in my book and then in the research book that I had bought. I also needed to do some reading for my education class. Edward began working on our music theory project. We were paired up to create a "Bach Chorale." We both had to create one, but we used each other to check our work, verifying that there were no parallel fifths, fourths and octaves. We worked in silence, occasionally sharing a kiss or twenty.

After a few hours in the field, we headed back to Edward's home. I began to make dinner, chicken parmesan. I also made my infamous rum cake. You could drunk off of this cake it was so good. The Cullens had some great rum and so the cake would be delicious. We ate dinner early and headed to a movie. Edward wanted to see some action movie with Angelina Jolie and Johnny Depp. We got the tickets and headed into the theater. We sat through this action packed movie, not really watching it. We spent most of the time just making out.

*Note to self, rent the Johnny Depp movie. He's a fine, fine man. Well, after Edward, of course.*

After the movie, we went back to the house and decided to go to bed. I had gotten us up early this morning. I grinned at what happened, Edward saw me out of the corner of my eye and he had the same grin on his face. We went to bed, but not to sleep. We had more naked fun time.

xx LC xx

## La Cantante

Edward and I headed back to Emerson in the late afternoon. We wanted to wait until Carlisle and Esme had returned from their medical conference. We had an early dinner of leftover chicken parmesan. They both raved over my meal, saying I could come and cook at their house anytime. I informed them of the surprise in their freezer of my chili. They were both pleasantly surprised at my 'gift' of food. We finished with some of my cake and Carlisle was making similar sounds what Edward makes when he's about to come. I giggled.

*Do not think of your boyfriend's father in such a manner, Swan. He's old. Well, not that old, but still.*

Before we headed back to Emerson, Carlisle mentioned that he wanted to talk to Edward. Edward eyed his father warily. Carlisle gave him a warm smile and told him not to worry about it. They disappeared to have their talk. I spend the time chatting with Esme about the 'boring medical conference.'

A half hour later, Edward returned and it looked like he had been crying, but he had a radiant grin on his face. I quirked an eyebrow and he mouthed 'later.' He gave his father a hug and then went over to Esme and did the same. I heard him mumble into her hair 'thank you.' He then walked to me and linked his fingers with mine and brought me upstairs. He seemed to float up the stairs and he glided as he packed his clothes in his duffel. He picked up our bags and again floated down the stairs. I watched him with a confused expression. We gave both Carlisle and Esme hugs good bye and we were on our way back to campus.

"Okay, Cullen. Spill," I said with a smirk.

"He buckled," Edward said with a joyful grin.

"What? You mean...?" I squealed.

"Yep! I have to finish out this semester, obviously but I'm switching majors. I'll have a lot of work to do, summer school and whatnot, but I'm going to be a music *education* major," he said.

## La Cantante

"Wait...what? You're going from pre-med to music education? I thought you wanted to perform," I said confusedly.

"I do want to perform, immensely. However, we both sat and listened to each other's side. He didn't want me to be a music major because of the financial instability. I get that. I didn't want to be a pre-med major because I fucking hate chemistry and don't get me started on blood. He got that. We compromised. We actually called Eleazar and we're meeting on Monday after University Singers. He's going to help me get my classes switched for next semester and set up a plan so I can graduate, with you. I'll be a fifth year senior, but I'm going to be doing what I love with the woman I love," he almost squealed.

I began to bounce in my seat. I really couldn't believe it. Edward would get a chance to live out his dream. I was so happy for him. I grabbed his hand from the center console of the car and kissed it enthusiastically. I then leaned across and gave him a kiss on the cheek.

"How did this happen, though, Edward?"

"Apparently, Esme and Alice have been getting in face about how unhappy I was. Then, when he met you, he saw how much music and performing meant to me. He said that I acted like I did when my mom was alive when you're with me. I explained to him that you are my singer and his eyes misted up. He had forgotten about the connection between my mom and me through music. I also called him when we got the opportunity to work with the University Singers as guest conductors. Then we compromised on the whole music education major and...yeah. It was you who was the biggest factor, Bella. You made him see what I am, what I'm capable of, what I lost when my mom died and how you gave it back to me. Thank you so much, my beautiful Bella. Thank you for helping in making all of my dreams come true," Edward said with tears in his eyes.

"Wow. I don't know what to say. You're welcome, Edward. I'd do anything for you. I love you," I whispered.

"I love you more, beautiful."

## La Cantante

"Impossible, handsome," I said with a roll of the eyes.

"Not impossible, beautiful. It's the truth. I love you more and more everyday that I'm with you. I am still in awe of you. You are intelligent, talented, beautiful, loving, selfless, strong...."

"Okay, okay, okay, Edward. I get it. Thank you. You're making me blush over here," I said sarcastically.

"You look at the menu at The Cage and you blush, Bella. It's really not that hard to do it to you," he teased.

"Meanie," I said as I twisted his nipple.

"Ow! That hurt! No wonder Emmett complains when you assault him. You're freakishly strong, woman."

"And don't you forget it, Cullen."

"Got it, Swan."

xx LC xx

We returned to Emerson and everyone was hanging out in my dorm room. Alice and Jasper were cuddled on their bed and Emmett and Rosalie were chatting. Rose was sitting on her bed and Emmett on her desk chair. Edward went up to his room and deposited his bags before coming back down. He was giddy with excitement when he told everyone his news. Alice launched from her bed and threw herself into Edward's arms, wrapping her arms and legs around his body. Edward nearly toppled over at her enthusiasm. She removed herself from him and launched herself at me, thanking me for being the deciding factor in the situation. I, of course, blushed. We all decided to head to McFinnigans for some celebratory 'grease.'

We headed back to Patterson and went our separate ways. Edward and I had to study for a theory test tomorrow. I also had to work on my lesson plan for my

## La Cantante

rehearsal with the men on Wednesday. After about an hour and half worth of studying, I took a quick shower and went to sleep.

Ever since the alleged stalking incident with Jacob, I've been having horrendous nightmares. Each nightmare more violent than the next. They were also very similar. It would begin with Edward and I in some sort of romantic situation and Jacob would come and ruin it. Sometimes he would kill me. Sometimes he would kill Edward. There was a nightmare where Jacob raped me, making Edward watch, before he killed Edward. I would wake up in a cold sweat. Whenever I was with Edward, the nightmares stayed away. When I wasn't, they would return, full force.

I had barely fallen asleep when the nightmare battered my subconscious.

*It started the same way, a romantic setting for Edward and I. Jacob came and he forcefully pulled me away from my love. He then beat me with a baseball bat, tearing my clothes away from me. Jacob removed his pants. Edward was being restrained by someone, crying for Jacob to stop. He jerked and tried to escape his captor, but to no avail. Jacob slammed into me and I cry out. He continues driving into my body, feeling like he's going to break me into two pieces.*

*Jacob sneers at Edward. "She'll never be yours. This bitch is mine and always will be mine." Edward struggles again and manages to pull away from his captor. I vaguely see his face. It looks so familiar.*

*Jacob pulls out a large knife and begins cutting at my body and I scream.*

"BELLA! Wake up!"

I blink my eyes open and I see my two roommates hovering over me. Rose is sitting on my bed, gently pushing my hair from my face. Alice is standing over her shoulder, wringing her hands with worry.

"Sorry. I didn't mean to wake you," I said, my voice rough from screaming.

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"Bella, we're really worried about you. These dreams are getting worse," Alice said sadly.

"Perhaps you should talk to someone, Bella. After I was raped, I saw a counselor and they really helped me get back control of my life," Rose said gently.

"I'm fine."

"Do you want to talk about it?" Rose asked.

"Not really. However, this nightmare was different then other ones I've had. Usually they involve me, Edward and Jacob. There was another person in this nightmare. They looked familiar," I said.

"Who were they in the dream, Bella?" Alice asked.

"Edward was being restrained while Jacob hurt me. The person restraining Edward was the familiar face," I muttered. "I'll be fine. I promise. I didn't mean to wake you both up at... 3:37 in the morning. I'm sorry."

"We're here for you, Bella," Rose murmured. "You don't have to do this alone."

"Thank you. Both of you."

Alice and Rose went back to their beds. Within moments, I heard their breathing. I tried to go back to sleep, but couldn't. I stayed up the rest of the night, trying to figure out who the mystery person was in my dream.

# Crutches and Rehearsals

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*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*Thank you so much to BlindMindLover for the wonderful comment. It made me squeee!*

## Chapter 26: Crutches and Rehearsals

### EPOV

This weekend was amazing. I got to spend time with Bella. She had got some of her 'sparkle' back after the weekend away from Emerson. The previous week had drained her. It drained me. Hell, I think it drained all of us. The asshole, Jacob, was fucking with her life. Now, he was fucking with my life. I pray to God I never see him face-to-face, he will be seriously injured or killed.

However, back the most amazing weekend. We were able to spend some good quality time together. We talked. We laughed. We made out. We did everything but sex. I so can't wait until I can make love with her. It's fantastic what we do now, but it will be magical when we do finally make love. Though, Bella is a sex goddess already. Holy shit. Saturday morning? That was fucking hot. I mean, I'm about to burst my pants just thinking about it hot. Damn.

I also finally cannot believe that Carlisle buckled. He understood. He got it and he's letting me fulfill my dream. Esme and Alice helped him relent, but ultimately it was my relationship with Bella and her being my singer, my soul mate, that solidified his support. I had a lot of work to do. I knew that going into the conversation if he ever decided to relent. But, I am not a slacker. I never do things half-assed. It's all or nothing. I fell asleep with a smile on my face knowing I was able to pursue music and make a living at it.



xx LC xx

I woke up on Monday morning feeling refreshed and surprising light. I moved with a spring in my step as I showered and got ready for my day. Even the possibility of going to biochemistry wasn't making nervous or nauseous, like usual. I was maintaining an A in the class and probably will keep it up for the rest of the semester, but the pressure of the class was not there anymore.

I decided to dress it up more today. I grabbed a pair of black khakis and a gray sweater. I put on a black jacket over the top and spritzed on some cologne. I even went so far as putting that pomade shit in my hair. I looked at my reflection and I smiled. I looked happy. Genuinely happy. I grabbed my messenger bag and ran to the cafeteria for Bella's coffee before heading to her room.

I knocked quietly on the door. No one answered. I knocked again. Same response. I checked the door and saw that it was unlocked. I peaked my head inside. Alice and Rose were gone. Bella was still in bed. I walked up to her bed and gently nudged her shoulder.

"Bella. Wake up. We've got class, beautiful," I said quietly as I ran my fingers through her soft hair.

"What time is it?" she mumbled into her pillow.

"Ten after seven, beautiful."

She shot up out of bed and looked at me with crazed eyes. "What? I must have slept through my alarm. Fuck." She started rushing around her room. She ran into the bathroom. I heard her brush her teeth. She dashed out of the bathroom and pulled a pair of jeans from her dresser, whipped down her sleep pants and pulled her jeans on. "Turn around, Edward."

I gave her a confused look. She walked up to me and turned my body so it was away from her. I vaguely heard her shirt come off and the snaps of a bra. I rolled my eyes. I'd seen her naked, for Christ's sakes. She came back to the bed

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and threw on some socks, grabbed a hat, and slipped on her shoes. She had managed to get ready in three minutes flat.

*Impressive, if I might say.*

She grabbed her keys, phone and bag and pulled me off of the bed. She dragged me down the hallway and was moving very quickly to the stairs. We were almost to the bottom when her shoe caught on one of the stairs and she took a tumble. I felt my heart stop as I watched her fall.

"Shit! Bella!" I cried as I ran down the remaining stairs. "Are you okay?"

She was crumpled on the floor, holding her right ankle. Her face was contorted in pain. I saw some tears fall down her cheeks. I threw my bag down and knelt by her side. "Baby, what hurts?"

"My ankle. I felt a pop," she squeaked. "It hurts."

"Let me take a look at it, beautiful," I said gently. I moved her hands out of the way and I saw that it was already beginning to swell. I whipped out my phone and dug through my bag. I pulled out the syllabus from music theory and called Larry.

"Dr. Meyer's office, James Lofton speaking," James said.

"Is Larry there?" I asked.

"Just a moment," James said, almost like he was bored. I heard a bit of shuffling and then Larry picked up.

"This is Dr. Meyers."

"Larry, it's Edward Cullen," I said as cradled the phone between my chin and shoulder. I eased Bella so she was sitting. "There's been a bit of an accident this morning. Bella took a tumble down the stairs in her dorm. I'm afraid that she may have injured her ankle. I'm taking her to the hospital. We won't be able to

take the exam today for theory."

"Thanks for letting me know, Edward. Is Bella alright?" he asked with concern.

"Her right ankle is pretty swollen. I want to take her the ER to get some X-rays. When can we make up the exam?"

"Do either of you have classes after theory?"

"No, sir."

"Then, you'll both take it after class on Wednesday. Tell Bella to feel better. See you tomorrow morning Edward," he said.

"Thanks, Larry. See you tomorrow," I said before I ended the call. I put my phone in my pocket and slung both Bella's and my messenger bags over my head. I then gently picked Bella up. She winced slightly.

"Thank you, Edward."

"What am I going to do? Leave you on the floor? Come on; let's get you to the hospital. Your ankle needs an X-ray," I said as I carried her out to the car.

Two and a half hours later, two sets of x-rays, an incompetent resident and pissed off attending, Bella was sent home with a pair of crutches and an ankle wrap. She had just sprained it. Hell, I could see that according to the x-rays. The resident insisted that she had a compound fracture. Seriously? I'm a college student with minimal medical knowledge and I could see that there were not fractures in the fucking x-ray. I demanded that an attending look at her films before getting her foot placed in a cast. The attending concurred with my assessment and gave the resident a glare. He told her to stay off of her feet and use the crutches as needed. She could put weight on it, but don't push it. She asked about Express rehearsal. He told her that she needed to sit out at least one week, possibly two.

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As we waited, Bella called all of her professors to inform them of her accident. She didn't have any work due today, save for the exam we missed this morning. I did the same for my biochemistry class. I had a lab report due, but the professor told me to email it to him before three and it would not be marked late.

We would get back in time for University Singers but I insisted that Bella stay in her room, but I needed to go. I had my meeting with Eleazar to discuss my switching majors. She easily acquiesced to my insistence. As I looked at her, she looked exhausted. Her face was pale, hair was limp and she had dark circles under eyes. I gave her a concerned look and she just shrugged. I was about to speak up when the nurse came in with her discharge papers and crutches. She gave her a quick tutorial on how to use them. She chuckled and said she was an expert. I dashed out and pulled the car to the entrance of the ER and helped her in.

We rode back to Emerson in silence. Bella actually fell asleep on the short ride back from the hospital. I was pulling into the parking lot when I saw Emmett heading to his truck. I flagged him down and asked for his help. I quickly told him what happened and he laughed. He said that he was surprised that Bella lasted this long without injuring herself. I handed him the crutches and our bags. I picked Bella up from the car and I carried her to her room. Emmett took her keys out of her bag and unlocked it. I gently deposited her into her bed, taking off her shoes and placing a pillow underneath her right foot. I also got the icepack that was in her freezer and wrapped it around her ankle. I glanced at the clock on Rose's desk. It was almost time for University Singers. I quickly wrote Bella a note saying where I was and that I would be back after my meeting. I pressed a kiss to her forehead before I grabbed my bag and headed to class.

University Singers was pretty uneventful. We were supposed to have sectionals today, but Eleazar decided not to because Tyler was out with the flu and Bella's ankle. We focused our attention on a new piece, "Prayer for the Children." We also sight read the school's Alma Mater for the Homecoming Game on next Saturday. Before the end of rehearsal, Eleazar reminded us that we had gender specific rehearsals on Wednesday and Friday. The men were to rehearse on

## La Cantante

Wednesday and women on Friday. He dismissed us and we walked into his office. He clicked the door shut and gestured to a large leather sofa in his office. I put my bag on the floor and sat down on the comfy looking couch. Eleazar grabbed a pad of paper from his desk and did the same.

"Edward, I can't tell you how happy I am that you have decided to become a music education major. You are one of the most talented students that I've worked with. You and Bella are quite a force to be reckoned with. I'll let you know, I'll be crying like a baby when both of you graduate," he said with a smile.

"I'm extraordinarily happy as well. I was flummoxed when my father relented and actually encouraged me to switch my major. I know it will be a lot of work, but it'll be worth it," I replied.

"Well, Edward. I took a look at your transcripts. You've just started music courses, except for your performance ensembles, this year. I mapped out a plan for you to graduate in four years from now. So essentially, you'll be a 'freshman' again in the aspect of the music program this year. However, by the end of the semester, you'll technically be a junior with the amount of credits you've taken. Make sense?"

"Kind of. Simply, I'll graduate a year later, right?" I asked.

"That's right. I've already contacted the registrar and did some preliminary things for you. You'll need to fill out this paperwork indicating your change in major. You'll also need to drop several courses from your second semester class load to make room for your new music courses and education courses. These are the classes you will need to sign up for in second semester: Introduction to Education, Psychology 1..."

"I've already taken Psychology 1, Eleazar. I took it last year," I explained.

"Excellent. Then you should sign up for Educational Psychology. You'll also need to enroll in the education program here at the university. Here's the paperwork for that. In regard to the music portion, you're already enrolled in

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music theory and aural harmony 2. You'll also need to add music literature. My suggestion is for you to drop calculus 2, as you only need one math course being a education major, human anatomy, and advanced biochemistry courses that you are signed up for."

"Let me get this straight. Drop calculus, human anatomy and advanced biochem and add intro to education, educational psychology and music literature?" I asked.

"That's right. Plus the paperwork to switch majors and advisors. You'll be working with me now. Also the paperwork to the education program. Do you have any questions, Edward?"

"Nope. Thank you for all of your help, Eleazar. It means more to me than you can imagine."

"Excellent. How's Bella?" he asked.

"She's fine. Pissed that she fell. She sprained her ankle but should be on her feet in no time."

"Tell her I hope she's feeling better. I'll make sure I have a conductor's stool for her on Wednesday. She probably shouldn't be standing."

"She'll appreciate that. I'm going to fill out this paperwork and turn it in to the registrar and education department. Thank you again!" I said as I got up from the couch. I put the paperwork into my bag and shook his hand. I exited his office and pulled out my phone.

*Just finished my meeting with Eleazar. Went well. Have to fill out some paperwork and drop it off. Be there in a half hour, beautiful. - E*

*That's awesome, baby. Thank you for carrying my fat ass up to my room - B*

*Bella, you are not fat. You obviously don't see yourself very clearly - E*

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*Okay, fat I'm not. Clumsy, definitely - B*

*This is true. - E*

*Ass - B*

*Am not - E*

*Are to - B*

*Are we twelve? - E*

*\*Sticks out tongue\* - B*

*I guess we are - E*

*See you in a bit, baby - B*

*Love you, beautiful - E*

*Love you, too - B*

I got to the registrar's office and quickly filled out my change in major paperwork. It needed my new advisor's signature. I noticed that Eleazar had already signed the papers. I turned the paperwork into the older woman in the office. She gave me a warm smile and put the papers into a pile on her desk. She said that she would email me when the paperwork went through. It would take about a week. I then walked to the education building and turned in the papers needed there. I would get a letter in my school mail if I needed anything further.

I quickly walked back to Patterson, eager to get to Bella. I wanted to check on she was feeling and ask her why she looked so drawn today. I passed Alice as I was walking.

"Why is Bella in our room with crutches, big brother?" she fumed.

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"She fell down the stairs in the dorm. I took her to the hospital this morning and she sprained her ankle, Pixie," I explained.

"That sucks."

"Yeah, it does. Did anything happen last night? Bella seemed really tired today and actually she wasn't even up when I went to get her for theory."

"She had a nightmare. A bad one. She was screaming bloody murder about Jacob and you dying," Alice said sadly. "I don't think she fell back asleep until after 5 this morning. The nightmare happened at 3:30."

"Fuck. She didn't have any nightmares this weekend. I wonder why?" I mused.

"She was with you. Perhaps you keep them away," she responded. "Maybe, we're getting a fourth roomie. Just don't leave your boxers on the floor," she said with a wink.

"Alice, you're the slob. Not me. I have my OCD-like tendencies."

"You are really anal, Edward. You're the only person I know who uses the Dewey Decimal system to organize their CDs and records. You are such a nerd," she laughed.

"Thanks, Pixie," I said with a sardonic grin. "I'll see you later."

"Bye, Green-Eyed Freak," she said as she turned to skip down the sidewalk.

I got to Patterson and walked up to Bella's room. The door was open and I poked my head in. Rosalie was sitting at her desk, typing on her laptop. "Hey, Rose."

"Hi, Edward. How are you doing?" she asked with a warm smile. Rose had really come out of her shell. She seemed much more personable then when I first met her. She seemed pretty comfortable with me, but still was leery about Jasper and Emmett.



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"I'm good. I just ran some errands around campus. I had to drop off some papers to the registrar and education department for the switch of my major. My hand is cramping from all the writing," I joked.

"Poor baby. If you're looking for Bella, she's in the shower. She felt 'icky, gross and nasty' from being in the hospital earlier today," she giggled.

"Okay. Do you mind if I hang out until she gets done?" I asked.

"No. Not at all," Rose said as she turned back to her computer. After a few moments, the typing stopped. "Did Alice mention to you what happened last night, Edward?"

"Yeah. She did. How bad was it, Rose?" I asked as I sat down on Rosalie's bed. She turned in her chair and looked me in the eyes. Something Rose never did before.

"She was thrashing about her bed and let out a blood curdling scream. She said that the dream was about Jacob, you and someone holding you back. Restraining you from getting to Bella. The person restraining you, she said, looked familiar. At least in her dream. I also don't think she fell back asleep. When I got up to work out this morning, she had her eyes closed, but I could tell she was awake. She's terrified about what's happening. I can't say that I blame her. I'm terrified, too. It hits a little too close to home," Rose said quietly.

"Were you attacked, Rosalie?" I asked. "Were you hurt?"

"In the worst possible way, Edward. I was gang raped by five men at Northwestern, one of whom was my supposed boyfriend. I had nightmares like Bella's for months. I still get them," she said as she looked down at her hands.

"Holy shit, Rose. I had no idea. I'm so sorry," I gasped.

"I transferred schools because of what happened to me. I'm still apprehensive around men, for obvious reasons. You, Jasper and Emmett are the first guys

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I've talked to, besides my dad, since the attack. The first men I've actually created relationships with. Out of all you, I feel most comfortable around you. Probably because you take such good care of Bella and you have to deal with Alice. How do you do it?"

"Copious amounts of alcohol. I have to drink when I'm around her for more than a few days at a time. If not, I'll kill the pixie," I said seriously.

Rose nodded seriously and I could see her fight back her laughter. She snorted, and then laughed hysterically. I joined her, snorting right along with her. She quickly sobered from her paroxysm of giggles and laid her hand on my knee. "You're a good man, Edward Cullen. A very good man. Bella is lucky to have you."

"Thank you, Rosalie. You're very kind and sweet to say so," I replied as I felt my cheeks flame.

"Bella's not the only blusher. Nice," she sniggered.

"Oh, good lord," I replied as I rolled my eyes.

I walked over to Bella's laptop and checked my watch. I still needed to send off my lab report. I logged into her computer and went to the email program. I sent off my lab report from my flash drive to my professor. I got an immediate response, thanking me for my promptness. I had logged off the email program when I heard Bella curse in the bathroom. Rose and I shared a look of concern.

"Do you want to go or should I?" Rose asked.

"I'm going to pass it off to you since she really doesn't know that I'm here. If I walk into the bathroom and she's naked and crutches. I know she'll fall again and I might get a crutch up my ass," I snickered.

"Good point. Don't go far. I may need your strength if she has fallen," Rose said as she got up and poked her head in the bathroom. "You okay, Bella?"

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"No! I hate these fuckers! They suck! Stupid sprained ankle," I heard her yell.  
"Can you grab me a pair of track pants from my bottom dresser drawer?"

"Sure, Bella. Oh, Edward's here, by the way," Rose said.

"Thanks Rose."

Rose scuttled and got Bella some track pants. She also grabbed a t-shirt from the same drawer and went back in the bathroom. I heard some rustling and Rose and Bella came out of the bathroom. Bella had her hair in a braid down her back, wearing her track pants and a t-shirt.

"Hey, Edward. Sorry about falling asleep on you in the car. I slept like crap last night," she said as she crutched over to her bed. She plopped down and put her foot up on the pillows I had put out earlier.

"I know. I heard. Alice and Rose told me about your nightmare. Do you want to talk about it?" I asked as I sat down on her bed, by her feet.

"Not really. They are just really bad and very similar. It always starts with us in some romantic setting and they always end the same with Jacob hurting you or me or both of us," she said as she laid back on her pillow.

"What made last night so bad? Rose said you were screaming," I pressed. She needed to talk about this.

"Shit. Jacob starting beating me up with a baseball bat. He then ripped off my clothes as he hit me. You were being held by someone and you couldn't get to me. Jacob got me naked and he pulled down his pants and he forced himself into me. He raped me in my dream. You managed to pull away from the person holding you and I vaguely remember their face. They looked familiar. I can't quite place it. Then Jacob starting cutting me and that's when I woke up," she said quietly.

"You didn't have these nightmares this weekend. I think I would have remembered you screaming. Why do you think?" I asked.

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"I'm not sure. Perhaps just being with you kept the nightmares away. I don't know," she said.

"Do you want me to stay with you? If that's alright with Rose and Alice, of course."

"Let's try tonight without you and if I don't have a nightmare, then we're good. If not, then I'll ask you to stay. I don't want to impose. You need your sleep, too."

"Baby, my biggest concern is you. I actually sleep much better with you in my arms. I know where you're at. This may sound stupid, but when I'm with you I feel like I'm home. I feel complete when I'm around you."

"I feel the same way, Edward. It's not stupid."

I got up from my place by her feet and sat closer to her face. I gently cupped her chin and pressed my lips to hers. She opened her mouth slightly and moaned. I slipped my tongue into her mouth and ran my hands down her shoulders. I heard a throat being cleared behind us.

*Shit. I forgot. We're not alone.*

"You two are seriously nauseating. Get a room," Rose snickered.

"Sorry, Rose," we both replied contritely.

xx LC xx

Bella didn't have a nightmare that night. She was up and ready to go when I went down to her room. She was not using her crutches. I eyed her warily and she said that they were more of a danger to her than walking. She did have on some supportive shoes and she showed me an ankle brace she had on her foot. I still supported her as we walked to class. I was very close to driving her to classes, but she said no. I was crazy. It was an ankle sprain, not a freaking Greek tragedy. Her words, not mine.

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Tuesday was pretty low key. Bella chatted with Larry after aural harmony to verify that it would not affect our grades to take the test on Wednesday. He said that it was fine. Her health was more important than a test over major and minor key signatures. Bella went to her voice lesson and I went to my biochem lab. I was actually started to understand this biochem stuff. However, I still hated it. The rest of the day whizzed by after that. Bella and I spent some time in her room on Tuesday evening, watching some reality television show about some idiots from the Jersey shore. Gotta love MTV.

Wednesday, Bella and I went to theory and saw that Larry was not there. That meant that James was leading the lecture. That also meant that we were going to be thoroughly confused. James got through the lecture, not really explaining anything. After class, Bella and I stayed behind to take our exam. James gave us both a sour look, mumbling something about 'preferential treatment.' I wanted to clobber the fucker. Bella gave me a pointed look saying that he wasn't worth the energy. We took our test and were done in about fifteen minutes. It was pretty simple. After our test, Bella and I got a quick breakfast. She gimped off to her psychology and education class and I went to my favorite class in the world, biochemistry.

*Insert sarcasm here.*

After biochem, I went to Brandon. Today, Bella was leading the men's rehearsal for her piece. Eleazar encouraged me to look at the song for 'back up' for Bella. I took note of places where we struggled during our read-through and first rehearsal. I jotted down a few notes and then worked on the piece so I was comfortable for my part. I usually sing second tenor. However, for the song, I'd be singing first tenor at Eleazar's request. He said my voice had changed over the summer and he wanted me to sing the higher part if we ever split. Last year, I bounced between second tenor and first baritone. Now, I'm a first tenor. Heh...who knew? I headed to the large rehearsal room and I found Bella talking with Eleazar and Carmen. She was going over her plan of attack with them. I gave her my reassurance last night that her plan was solid. However, what did I know? I don't have a doctorate degree in music education or a masters in choral conducting. She seemed nervous. I knew that she was going to do fine. Whenever she was in front of a group, her insecurities dissipated and this

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confident, self-assured woman took over. It made me hard thinking about her like that.

At the beginning of rehearsal, Bella went behind the piano. Eleazar said that her weaknesses were my strengths. She needed to get comfortable with the piano. She would lead warm ups from there. She was an excellent pianist. I was better, but I was told that I was fucking piano prodigy. However, she was competent on the keyboard. She led her warm ups, with a few fumbles. After her warm ups, she asked us to turn to the portion of the song we had worked on last time. It was the key change/accapella section. She had us read through the section, without any piano assistance. She pointed out a few spots that were rough. She worked with the baritones and second tenors as their parts were very close and clashed a bit. She then added the basses next and finally the first tenors. She then asked us to turn to the beginning of the song and she informed us that there would be two solos: a tenor and a bass.

*I'm so trying out....and I'm such a dork to try and impress my girlfriend with my mad singing skills.*

We ran through the solo section and put it into context with the song. At this point, we had learned nearly three quarters of the song. Rehearsal was almost over. Bella said she wanted to a 'dress rehearsal' of the piece, up to where we stopped and then read it to the end.

Bella then asked for volunteers to read the solos. I raised my hand for the tenor; Jasper did the same for the bass. Our hands were the only ones raised so Bella indicated for the both us to do the solos. Bella cued in Carmen and she started the introduction of the song. I would be singing first. Right before I was to come in, I locked eyes with hers and she gestured for me to start singing. I began and I saw her mouth turn up to a smile. She cued in the rest of the guys when they were supposed to come in with a flick of the wrist. She repeated the action with Jasper. We got to the key change and Carmen dropped out. Some of the men were thrown but we kept going. For the most part, we followed her. There were a few 'unexpected solos' of guys who were not paying attention, but oh well. We read the song to the end and Bella cut us and Carmen off with a flourish.

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"That was excellent reading, guys. Thank you, Edward and Jasper for volunteering to sing the solos. I appreciate it. A few things that should be mentioned, during the solos, the entrance was fantastic. Perfect volume and I loved the pure vowel. Second tenors, excellent job during the chorus of the piece. I know that you were struggling with your part, but you got it. During the key change section, please make sure that you are following me. There were a few flubs, people not cutting off during that section. Basses, make sure that you are supporting your lower notes. It sounded more like growling than singing. You guys have beautiful voices. Support them. Other than that, I've got nothing else. Eleazar?" Bella asked.

"I agree with your assessment, Bella. Edward, can you come up to the front?"

I pulled my music from my folder and went up to the podium. "Edward, can you please run through the piece? Bella, watch Edward does. Gentleman, please follow what Edward cues you to do."

"Jasper, can you still sing the bass solo? I also need a volunteer for the tenor," I asked. Austin, the other tenor from our little madrigal group raised his hand and I nodded to him. I looked to Carmen and she gave me a warm, supportive smile.

*Please, I'm going to need it.*

I gave her the cue to come in, a bit faster than Bella conducted.

*Stupid nerves.*

I gestured for Austin to come in and he entered confidently. We continued with the rest of the song. I had a different interpretation of the key change section and the guys followed me for the most part. At the conclusion of the song, I cut them and Carmen off with a sharp flick of my wrist. I stepped down from the podium and turned to Eleazar.

"Excellent job, Edward. Do you have any comments for the guys?"

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"I concur with what Bella articulated about the piece earlier. There were a few spots that were rough with her run-through that improved with mine. The key change section, you followed my gestures much more clearly. Basses, nice job on supporting the lower tones; it was still gravelly in places but improved."

"Bella, what was your take on Edward's interpretation?" Eleazar questioned.

"I liked his tempo much better. It had more of a 'groove.' I also liked his cues and gestures during the key change section. I may have to adopt some of those. The group seemed to follow them more closely," she said as she glanced at her notes that she took during my run-through.

"Excellent job. Both of you and to you guys as well. Thank you for being so patient in our little experiment. If you don't have any questions, gentlemen, you are free to go. Don't forget, you have Friday off. See you next week."

The guys began gathering their things and departed the room. Jasper walked up to me with a smile and gave me a fist bump. Eleazar gave me a satisfied smile as he clapped me on the shoulder. He walked over to Bella and gave her a hug.

"You both are doing extraordinarily well. Definitely a force to be reckoned with. How are you feeling, Bella?" Eleazar asked.

"I'm okay, Eleazar. I'm moving a little slower because of the gimpiness, but I'm used to it. I should be back to normal by this weekend, hopefully."

"I'm glad you are alright. I'll let you guys head off to your piano lessons. I'll see you both on Friday," he said as he gathered his things.

After Eleazar left, Bella visibly relaxed. "Holy Crow. This is hard work."

"Tell me about it, beautiful. Thank you for your comments. They mean a lot," I said as I pulled her into a hug.

"I mean it. Teachers are notorious for stealing other people's ideas. I've got a whole binder full of music from Garrett and another binder full of worksheets,



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activities and warm ups."

"I love you, beautiful."

"I love you, too Edward. Go play some piano and I'll see you later," she said as she swatted my ass.

"Yes ma'am," I said as I clicked my heels and headed to my piano lesson.

xx LC xx

Wednesday evening we had Breaking Midnight rehearsal. We wanted to make sure that we liked the set list that we chose for the Homecoming Chapel party. That was coming up next Friday. After about three hours of rehearsal, we loaded up and headed back to Patterson. I actually crashed in Bella's room. I had fallen asleep as she was showering and she didn't have the heart to wake me.

Thursday was long. Thursdays are always long. Aural harmony sucked. We had a sight reading test that was unannounced. I bombed it, royally. My biochemistry partner was sick and didn't make it to the lab. U.S. History was boring. Bella and I actually fell asleep in the back of the room. Jasper came and smacked me on the head to wake me up. I gave him the finger. In calculus, we had a test. I did fine, but it still was a test. I grabbed a quick bite to eat before heading to Express rehearsal. Bella was coming to rehearsal, but not dancing. She wanted to make sure that she watched and learned the choreography and knew her spot in the formations. We learned two more songs and the choreography for those pieces. We also received our 'gender' pieces for Express. The ladies were singing "Gimme, Gimme, Gimme" from Mamma Mia and the guys were singing "Joy to the World." Before we left, Felix asked Rose and I to stay behind. He handed us some music and told us that we were singing the solos for "Four Minutes" by Madonna and Justin Timberlake. We were also the featured dancers; Rose was going to choreograph our dance duet. Bella was excited for both of us.

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Friday rolled around and I couldn't believe how fast the week had gone. Bella and I went to theory and we received our tests back. We aced them, of course. Larry re-explained the lecture from Wednesday in terms that we understood. He was getting numerous complaints about James' teaching style. Apparently we were not the only ones who thought he sucked.

Biochemistry whizzed by, surprisingly and I went to Brandon to work on my plan for my rehearsal with the women for my piece today. I was so fucking nervous. I did okay during the second rehearsal. Eleazar worked with me on some conducting things. The women were very patient throughout the whole ordeal. I didn't accomplish what I had planned for the rehearsal, but I felt more confident in my conducting skills. I also didn't go behind the piano, once. I decided that I wanted to work on the slower section of the song. I made some notes in my notebook and on some sticky notes on my score. I practiced some of my gestures that I had planned to use in the section and by the time came where I had to go to the rehearsal room, I felt comfortable.

I walked into the rehearsal room. Some of the women were there, chatting. Eleazar and Carmen were huddled by the piano. I walked in and put my music onto the music stand by the podium and walked to where Eleazar and Carmen were talking.

"Hello, Edward. Are you ready for your rehearsal?" Eleazar asked with a smile.

"Ready as I'll ever be," I said with a nervous chuckle.

"I want you to lead warm ups today. You can use the piano. You might need your security blanket," Eleazar said with a laugh.

"Thanks," I replied sarcastically. I went and sat behind the piano. I jotted down some warm ups that I wanted to do on a scratch piece of paper by the keys. I quickly ran my hands over the keyboard, practicing those warm ups. I took a brief glance at the clock and noticed it was almost time to begin. I got up from the piano and walked to the podium. Bella, Alice and Rose were there and sitting in the front row. Alice gave me an enthusiastic thumbs up, Rose smiled and Bella mouthed that she loved me. I gave them a wink.

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*You can do this, Cullen. Be confident. It's just another performance.*

I began my warm up in a fashion similar to Eleazar with some physical things. I then went behind the piano and worked through the list of warm ups that I created before rehearsal. They were a combination of warm ups that we'd done before and some that I did in high school. After our ten minute warm up, Carmen went to the piano and I asked the women to take out their music and we reviewed the opening section from our last rehearsal. I made a few corrections that needed to be addressed, but it was a solid review. I then asked them to turn to the slower section. We read through it, at half of the tempo I wanted to go at. They were pretty comfortable with the section. I asked the altos to sing their part and then sopranos. I worked on my piece for about a half hour, fine tuning dynamics, notes, tempos and rhythms. I saw out of the corner of my eye Eleazar's pleased smile. I also saw Bella give me a piercing look of pride, love and lust. She looked like she was going to jump me in the middle of rehearsal.

*Not that I would mind. I felt the same way when she was up on the podium.*

After about forty-five minutes, I was pleased with their progress. I wanted to perform the piece, at least what we knew. I explained my intentions and the ladies nodded their assent. I looked at Carmen and cued her in. We performed the piece admirably. There were a few spots that needed my attention and I jotted them down on my notes as we went. It's amazing how you need to split your brain while you are conducting. You need to maintain the steady beat, using the appropriate conducting pattern with one hand, give entrances, exits and dynamics with the other hand, mentally remember mistakes and missed cues...the list was endless. I loved it.

I ended my run through and gave the women my assessment. I pointed out the positives that were done and nitpicked over some things that were being made on a regular basis. Eleazar said that he felt that I had improved tremendously since my last rehearsal. My conducting pattern was more confident and I was more sure about the decisions I was making. He then asked Bella to come up and conduct the piece. I was anxious and excited to see her interpretation. She went a bit faster in the beginning section and significantly slowed down in the

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slow section. I liked the contrast. She also had a more legato feel to the slow section and I liked the distinction with my marked and staccato feel of the opening section. She completed her run through of my piece and glanced down at my notes. They were barely legible but I understood them. Eleazar made some comments about Bella's interpretation and then turned to me. I commented on the notes that I made and the changes that I wanted to make based off of her performance of the piece. Eleazar dismissed us after our commentary. He gave me an encouraging nod and a smile to Bella.

As soon as the room was empty, Bella's eyes darkened and she moved toward me. I was standing by the piano. Her hips were swaying and her body moved very seductively. I gave her a crooked grin and I felt my body react to her feline-like approach.

She reached up and pulled me down to her face. Her lips crashed into mine and her tongue was thrust into my mouth. I groaned as her hands snaked around my waist and pulled my hips to hers. My hands moved to her long, silky hair and I gently tugged. Bella moaned at the sensation. She tugged on my lip with her teeth before she pulled away.

"Do you know how fucking hot you are on the podium, Edward?" she whispered.

"You're more hot up there, beautiful. I wanted to take you on the piano on Wednesday," I growled.

"The feeling is definitely mutual, handsome. As much as I want to take you back to one of our rooms and make you squirm, I do need to see Garrett. I need your keys," Bella said. "However, to be continued?"

"You can count on it, beautiful," I said as I pulled my keys out of my pocket. "I'm already on the street. Please drive safe. I love you, *il mio cantante*."

"I love you, too. I'll be back at 5:30 at the latest," she said as she gave me one more searing kiss. She grabbed her bag and limped slightly to the door. She waved before she left. I leaned against the piano and brought my hand to my

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lips. Bella and I still had this connection, this electricity when touched. My lips were tingling, as was the rest of my body.

*I can't wait until next weekend. I really can't wait until 'when.'*

**A/N: For your listening pleasure, I highly suggest "River in Judea" and "Listen to the Angels Shouting." I conducted and sang both in college and they are absolutely fun pieces. Also, thank you to all of the people who have commented on my story. I've received such positive feedback. I get very giddy when I get a new review. Thank you so much! I'll try to do shout outs as I get 'em!**

# Homecoming

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*Thank you so much Eeyore16 for the awesome review! Also, hikari-hime 01, thank you for the words of encouragement and suggestions! :)*

*I own none of the songs in this chapter as well. They are just fun songs that make me smile.*

## Chapter 27: Homecoming Week

### BPOV

Can I just share that I hate being a gimp? I can't believe I fell Monday morning. I can't believe that I fucking sprained my ankle. At least I lasted a month without significantly maiming myself or anyone that I love. I think that is a new record. Go me!

After a week of gimpiness, I started to move little better on Sunday evening. I still had a slight limp, but I could at least walk around without being in pain. Edward was incredibly sweet the entire weekend. He made sure I was comfortable, but was not overly suffocating. I think he realized that I was not the type of girl who liked to be fawned over. My snapping at him about the protection detail after the Jacob-stalker issue clued him into that little tidbit.

Speaking of the Jacob-thing, I hadn't heard anything from the police. I'm assuming that nothing else had come to fruition. I'm hoping that this whole thing would just go away. However, my nightmares seemed to have dropped off. I still get them, but not as intensely as before. Having Rose, Alice and Edward close by seemed to have helped.

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On Sunday evening, we had a Breaking Midnight rehearsal. This would be the last one before our gig on Friday at The Chapel. We were solid on all of our pieces, but Edward, Mr. Perfectionist, wanted to make sure that there were no issues. I was definitely enjoying my time with Breaking Midnight. It was fun to sing, play and perform music for the enjoyment of it, not for a grade. I really liked the performance ensembles I was involved in, but the band was just pure fun. After two hours of rehearsal and running the set three times, Edward deemed us ready to go and we packed up our gear. The guys were insistent that I do nothing since I was still gimpy. I rolled my eyes and sat down on one of the speakers as they loaded up our stuff.

Edward handed me his keys and told me to head back to Patterson. He wanted to go with Jasper and Emmett to the storage locker. I took his keys and went back to our dorm. I parked his car and headed up to my room. Alice and Rose were there, along with Angela. They were laughing at something.

"Hey guys. What's so funny?" I asked as I dropped my stuff on my bed.

"Something that Ben did on our date last night," Angela said.

"What happened?"

"The morning that you and Edward went to the symphony, I ran into him in the hallway. I griped to Edward about how Ben didn't have a romantic bone in his body. His version of romance was an evening at McFinnigans, drinking beer and watching a sporting event. I asked him to give pointers to Ben," Angela began. "Apparently, Edward mentioned something to Ben."

"Oh, God!" I gasped. "What did Edward do?"

"He did nothing. He just mentioned to my oh-so-dense boyfriend that an evening at a sports bar is not romantic. Ben, the clueless guy he is, said why not. Edward just shook his head in shock. Anyway, Ben attempted to be romantic last night.

"He took me to Baci's which is a nice place. I happen to like it. He also told me to dress up. He picked me up and he was wearing his suit and tie. He looked yummy, by the way. We get to Baci's and there's this hostess there and she's totally ogling my boyfriend. I give her the hairy eyeball, but Ben's completely clueless. We're seated and we put our order in. Ben tries to feed me some of his dinner, but the noodles kept falling off of the fork. I started giggling and Ben glared at me. He tried again, same thing happened. I then reached my fork onto his plate and he was not happy. He pouted and said that he wanted to do it, like *Lady and the Tramp*. I lost it. I started laughing and I ended up snorting water through my nose I was laughing so hard. I finally calmed down and he managed to get one noodle on the fork and attempted to feed it to me. I went with it and tried to be all seductive. Ben then flipped his entire plate of pasta into his lap as he was going to get another noodle. He was cursing a blue streak and I was nearly on the floor in laughter. He stomped off to the bathroom and I got the check. I also got another order of Ben's meal wrapped up. As we are leaving, the hostess mentioned to Ben that he had something on his pants. He went off on her, saying he was going to sue her, sue the restaurant and that the whole world was against him. I was pissed at the time, but as I look back on it, it was very funny. I managed to get him calmed down and told him that if this is what is going to happen every time he attempted to be romantic, I'll take McFinnigans any day."

"Poor Ben," I snorted.

"Yeah, poor Ben. Anyway, I got to go and do my rounds. I need to make sure no one is lighting candles or have illegal contraband. See you later, girly!"

Angela left the room. Alice and Rose turned back to their homework and I went to grab my theory homework. I finally started my Bach Chorale and I wanted to put some touches to it. Nearly an hour later, I made some changes and Edward came in for his keys. He had a smirk on his features.

*Oh, he's up to something. I just know it.*

He plopped down on my bed and laid his head in my lap. I handed him my theory project and asked him to look at it. As he was looking at my homework,



## La Cantante

I idly played with his hair and ogled my boyfriend. He really was attractive. I mean, really, REALLY attractive. His hair was so soft and women would pay thousands of dollars for the natural highlights he had. His pale skin was flawless, save for a few freckles that were scattered across his nose and cheeks. His eyelashes were freakishly long. His eyes were so beautiful; it took my breath away when I looked up into them. They were such a gorgeous shade of green that changed depending on what he wore. I gently ran my hand down his cheek and felt the stubble that was growing there. His eyes closed and he leaned into my hand. He then opened his eyes and looked at me with a smile.

"I love you, beautiful," he said as he flashed his perfect teeth.

"I love you too, handsome. So, how does my chorale look?"

"Looks good. No parallel fifths, fourths or octaves. I'd like to hear it, but that'll have to wait until tomorrow. I'm going to head up to my room. The guys have been giving me shit about not hanging with them."

"Have fun. Don't let Emmett razz you too much," I said as I kissed his nose.

"If given the choice of hanging out with Emmett and Jasper, the snoring flatulence twins and you? I'd choose you a hundred percent of the time," he said with a crooked smirk.

"Do I want to know?"

"Both Jas and Em have a propensity to snore and fart in their sleep. It's disgusting and vile. I need to sleep with a gas mask it smells so bad in there," Edward said pulling his shirt over his nose and mouth.

"Um, ew. I think I just threw up in my mouth a little," I said as I scrunched my nose.

"Anyhow, wish me luck."

## La Cantante

"Will do, baby. Though, how is it you live with those two stinky slob and you smell like a proverbial flower, Cullen?" I asked, quirking an eyebrow.

"I take more showers than God and have an investment in many cologne companies. Last year, a bunch of guys thought I was gay. I'm not gay, obviously. I just like look and smell good, thank you very much. The appeal of looking like a hobo and smelling like a bag Fritos is just despicable," Edward said with a sardonic grin.

"I'm glad that you don't smell like Fritos, Edward. But I'd love you anyway if you did," I said.

"Thanks, baby. I think? This whole conversation has made feel like I need a shower so I'm going to go," he said as he kissed my cheek. He moved his mouth to my ear, "I wish you were in there with me, beautiful. Love you."

*And I need new panties. That boy is so sexy. Sexward is definitely hot.*

I squeaked at his confession and looked up through my lashes.

*Two can play this game, Sexward.*

I grabbed his face and brought my lips to his ear, "I plan thoroughly enjoy the shower, the bed and every available flat surface on Friday night after our gig at the Chapel. Don't forget, Edward, 'when' is coming, along with me."

"Fuuuuuuuuuuuuuck," he groaned.

*Bella 1; Edward 0.*

"Have fun in your shower, baby. See you tomorrow. Love you," I chirped.

"Love you, too," he grumbled. He quickly adjusted his pants before he got up and headed out of the door. He glanced back at me and he had a feral look in his eyes. I blew him a kiss and waved. He blew out a breath and rolled his eyes before heading up to his room.

xx LC xx

This week was Homecoming week. Every night there was some type of party or event. On Monday, we had a barbeque in the main quad of the campus. On Tuesday, there was a bonfire near the football stadium. Another local band played at the bonfire. They were okay. On Wednesday, there was an outdoor dance in the main quad. On Thursday, there was a standup comedian in one of the small theaters on campus. It was in Greene Academic Center, a small building that housed several offices, a couple classrooms and a small performance space. Also on Thursday, Rose, Alice and Angela dragged me to the spa to get pampered. I got my haircut, a manicure, pedicure and even the dreaded bikini wax. That shit hurt. They knew what I was planning with Edward on Friday night. Alice was even kind enough to let me borrow her credit card to reserve the room. I didn't have one and they wouldn't let me reserve the room with cash.

On Friday, we had a pep rally. The cheerleaders and dance team performed along with Emerson Express. We performed "River Deep Mountain High." We were not in our costumes, but a pair of blue jeans and black Express t-shirts. The guys' shirts were tight with the logo on them, while the girls' shirts had short capped sleeves and the Express logo with rhinestones. I had to forgo going to see Garrett because of the pep rally. I would see him one last time next week.

After the pep rally, Alice and Rose kidnapped me to get ready for our gig at The Chapel. I groaned at the idea of being "Bella Barbie." My hair was already huge for our pep rally performance. I had "poofed" after theory. I hot rolled my hair and teased it. I even put on some pretty heavy makeup: eye shadow, mascara, lipstick, blush, the whole kit and caboodle. I felt like a hooker with all of the crap on my face. Edward even mentioned the makeup. He said I didn't look like me. I totally agreed. However, being on stage, the 'Casper' look is not a good one. I needed to look like I was alive and not a corpse. I promised him that I would not look like a hoochie for our performance tonight.

I had planned on wearing the Breaking Midnight shirt that Emmett and Jasper got me for my birthday along with a pair of jeans and my black Chucks. When

## La Cantante

I got to my room, my idea for my outfit was immediately thrown out the window.

"Bella, you can't just wear jeans tonight," Alice whined.

"Why not? It's what the guys wear," I complained.

"They're guys. They have no fashion sense, Bella," Rose admonished. "Do you trust us?"

"I guess," I stammered.

"Not the rousing vote of confidence I was looking for, but it'll do," Alice said with a smile. "Shower. Now. Chop! Chop!"

"Wow, Alice. Bossy much?"

"You have no idea. I want you fresh-faced and clean. None of this show choir 'poof' crap. I'm so doing your hair and makeup the next time you have a performance for Express. Go!" Alice exclaimed.

I jumped into the shower and scrubbed my face and body clean. I toweled off and ran a brush through my hair, getting the knots from my "poofing" out earlier. I pulled on a pair of black, lacy panties that had red bows on them and a matching bra. I through my robe on over my underwear and walked back out into the dorm. On my bed was my outfit for the evening. I eyed it warily.

*It actually wasn't bad. Good job, Pixie.*

It was my Breaking Midnight shirt along with a black and red plaid pleated skirt. Alice also laid out a pair of black tights and my Doc Martens. I could do that. At least she's not having me wear a skin tight red dress with six inch heels. I'd have to kill her. I gave Alice the thumbs up and she bounced on her toes. She then dragged me to her desk and began attacking my head with some sort of hair product. She pushed my head between my knees and ran her fingers through my hair with the stuff. She then grabbed her blow dryer with a huge

cone thing on the end of it.

"What is that?" I asked pointing to her dryer.

"It's a diffuser. It'll make your hair really curly. Trust me, Bella. You'll look fabulous!"

Alice turned on her dryer and began scrunching my hair with the dryer. About an hour later, my hair was sufficiently curled and styled. She pulled it off of my face with two clips that were covered in red rhinestones. I looked at my hair and I really liked it. I always had wavy hair, but I never knew it could be this curly. Rose came up to Alice's desk, next. She was going to do my make up while Alice went to get dressed herself.

"Are you coming tonight, Rose?" I asked tentatively. Rose was very apprehensive about the first party at Emerson, for obvious reasons.

"Hell, yeah. I would not want to miss my kick ass roommate sing with her band," she replied as she applied my makeup. "I need to get back out there and start living. I can't let one horrible night dictate how I'm going to live my life. I know that Alice will be there along with you and the guys. I'll be fine. I'm actually looking forward to it."

"Awesome, Rose. I'm really happy that you're coming," I said with a smile.

"Me, too. Close your eyes," she instructed. Rose worked on me for a half hour. As she worked, Alice got out of the shower and quickly got dressed. She dashed out of the room, I'm assuming to check on Jasper. Rose and I shrugged. Rose deemed ready to perform and I turned to look at my reflection.

*My roommates are freaking miracle workers. They turned me, mousy Bella, into this hot-shot rock star. Day-um!*

My make up was perfect. My skin was evened out with a bit of foundation. I looked like I was glowing. I had bit of blush across my cheeks. What really surprised me were my eyes. Rose had put some light silver shadow across my

## La Cantante

lids and lined my eyes with black eyeliner. She also put on some fake eyelashes, but not a lot, just enough to lengthen them without looking trashy. My lips were coated in a natural lip color and a smattering of lip gloss. She handed me the lipstick and lip gloss to put in my pocket. I gave Rose a hug in appreciation. I walked to my bed and gathered my clothes and slipped them on. I turned to Rose and Alice, who had returned from Jasper's, after I was all ready.

"You look hot, Bella," Alice said simply.

"You're going to have guys falling all over themselves when you walk on stage, girl," Rose said with a mischievous grin.

"Before you go, Bella, I have something for you," Alice said as she scampered to her desk. She opened the top drawer and pulled out a little box. "Here you go."

"Thanks," I said as I took the small box. I opened it up and peered inside. On the cotton was a small black and red guitar pick with band logo for Breaking Midnight. "This is awesome! How did you get this?"

"I swiped your shirt and made a sketch of the logo. I brought it to a guitar shop and they were able to create the pick. Turn it over," Alice said.

I flipped the pick over and saw the writing on the back *Cantante di Edward* was etched into the plastic. I pulled Alice into a tight hug, rivaling her strength. I kissed the top of her spiky hair. "Thank you so much, Alice. This means so much to me."

"You're welcome, Bella. Go kick some ass!" Alice said as she pulled away from my hug. I nodded and headed upstairs to Edward's room. I grabbed my jacket and my messenger bag before I left. I had packed some clothes into my messenger bag for our evening after the concert.

I climbed the stairs, carefully. I didn't want to fall tonight. That would just suck. I strode down the hallway to Edward's room. I heard some cat calls and

wolf whistles as I moved through the hallway.

*Maybe I am hot? Sweet.*

I walked into the open door and I saw Emmett sitting on the couch, fiddling with his Xbox controller. He was playing some game. His shifted to look at me, briefly. He went back his game and seconds later, he realized that it was me in the doorway.

"DAY-UM, Isabelly!" he bellowed.

"Too much, Em?" I asked hesitantly.

"If you weren't my sister, I'd do you," he said with a chuckle.

"Ew, Em. That's gross. Seriously disgusting. Vile. Ew. Ew. Ew. Ew," I said bouncing around on my feet.

"Whatever, Isabelly. Jas and Edward are doing something. They should be back in about a half hour and then we'll head up to The Chapel. Want to play Call of Duty with me?"

"No, thanks, Em. I'm good."

I sat down on Edward's bed and pulled out my iPod. I wanted to listen to the songs that I was singing so I was comfortable with them. I also needed to mentally prepare for tonight. I knew that I would be nervous. I leaned back on Edward's bed and closed my eyes and let the music wash over me. I moved my fingers for the songs that I played keyboard for and for the songs I played the guitar. I lightly hummed the songs that I was singing back-up. I was very consumed in my preparations that I didn't notice that Edward and Jasper had returned. Edward actually kissed me before I recognized he was back. I jumped at his lips brushing mine. When I saw him, I pulled my ear buds out of my ears and stood up.

## La Cantante

I looked at him and he was wearing black jeans with his own black Breaking Midnight shirt. It was tight, like his Express shirt. It hugged his muscled body. He was also wearing his Doc Martens. His hair was a tousled mess, like always and his green eyes were sparking with excitement.

"You look awesome, Bella. Edward's going to have to pummel guys off of you with his guitar tonight," Jasper said. Edward shot him a look and Jasper laughed.

He took a step toward me as he turned back to face me. He snaked his arms around my waist and pulled me close. He leaned down and his lips were on the shell of my ear, "You looking fucking hot, Bella. I can't believe you're mine."

"Always, Edward," I breathed against his shoulder. I inhaled his scent. He smelled so good. I could smell his cologne and pomade that he had in his hair. "I can't wait to be alone with you, handsome."

"Me neither, baby," Edward said, his green eyes piercing through me. He pulled away and slowly spun me around. When my back was to him, he pulled me back to his chest and he murmured, "Mine. My beautiful singer."

"Yours. I want to show you something, handsome." I reached into my bag and pulled out my wallet. I took out the pick that Alice made for me and gave it to Edward. He smiled as he looked at the pick. "Flip it over." He did and his eyes darkened. He pulled me into a heated embrace. His tongue plunged into my mouth and I fisted my hands in his hair.

"Cullen! Stop tongue fucking my sister's mouth!"

Edward pulled away and flipped Emmett off. He kept his eyes on me. "Where did you get this?"

"Alice had it made for me."

"Remind me to hug the Pixie," he said as he kissed me again.



xx LC xx

It was a little after eight. The guys had already loaded up Emmett's truck. Jasper and Emmett piled into the truck and Edward and I got into his car. We drove up to The Chapel. The guys were still insistent that I not do much since my ankle was not a hundred percent. I thought they were being stupid, but if it meant I didn't have to lug heavy equipment around, that was perfectly fine. After the drums and sound equipment were loaded up, I began fussing with the sound board. The guys plugged in their guitars and we did a sound check. Things were a bit fuzzy and I made some quick adjustments. Afterward, things cleared up. It was about a quarter to nine by the time we finished our sound check. We headed backstage. Emmett was bouncing off the walls. Jasper was sitting on the ratty couch, going through the fingerings with his eyes closed for his part. Edward was pacing. I was panicking.

*Holy fuck. I can't do this. I'm going to fuck up. Play the wrong chord. Sing the wrong song. Shit!*

Edward had stopped his pacing and he saw the frantic look in my eyes. He walked over to me and cupped my face. "What's wrong, beautiful?"

"I'm going to fuck everything up. I...can't..." I said shaking my head.

"Bella, you're going to be fine. What are you afraid of?" Edward asked soothingly.

"Messing up everything. Singing the wrong song, playing the wrong chords, fucking up everything," I mumbled dejectedly.

"They know nothing. They don't care as long we sing and play for them. You can make a mistake and they'll be too blitzed to recognize it. Bella, you will do wonderfully. Trust me. I love you," Edward said as he ran his hands across my cheeks. He leaned down and gave me a sweet kiss. He pulled me into his arms and swayed back and forth. I took a few cleansing breaths and relaxed, marginally. He smacked my ass and pulled away. "You guys ready?"

## La Cantante

"Hells yeah!" Emmett boomed.

"Let's make some noise, bitches." Jasper said with a grin.

Emmett and Jasper came up to where Edward and I were standing. Edward grabbed my hand and then linked hands with Jasper. Emmett came and held hands with me and we bowed our heads. Jasper said a quick prayer in our little circle. We squeezed each other's hands and headed to the stage.

The guys switched on the amps and sound system. I did the same for the keyboard amp. I took my place behind my keyboard and took another deep breath. I heard Emmett count off and the guys began the introduction for our first song, "Girl's Not Grey," by AFI. I played keyboard for this piece and sang backup. The crowd went wild as we performed. I could feel the energy emanating from the crowd. As I played, I noticed Alice and Rose off to the side of the room, screaming loudly. Angela and Ben were also there, holding hands. We finished our first song and Edward introduced the band.

"Happy Homecoming, Emerson! We're Breaking Midnight! I hope you guys have fun tonight," Edward said into his microphone. He nodded to me and I began the next song, "Criminal" by Fiona Apple. I played keyboard and sang lead for this song. I morphed my voice so it had a more sultry feel. I could feel Edward staring at me as I sang. I imagined I was singing just for him, saying I was a "bad, bad girl." I licked my lips before the end of the song and Edward stared at me with lust in his eyes.

*Soon, baby. Very soon.*

We sang through the next few songs without incident. Edward managed to calm himself down. He stopped eyefucking me. We performed "Drive" by Incubus, "Flood" by Jars of Clay, "Bring Me to Life," by Evanescence, Jasper sang with me on that one, "Land of Confusion" by Disturbed and "Crazy" by Alanis Morissette.

We slowed it down after "Crazy." We decided to an acoustic set. Edward and Jasper both pulled out their acoustic guitars for the next few songs. The crowd

## La Cantante

continued to go wild with our performance. Alice and Rose were smiling; their faces were being split in two. Our final set in the acoustic portion was "Carry On My Wayward Son." An oldie but a goodie.

After the acoustic portion of our concert, I stepped from behind the keyboard and picked up my electric guitar. We were playing my favorite song of the whole set, "Decode." I was also the most nervous about this one. I am an excellent singer, good pianist, but an okay guitarist. Edward was playing lead guitar and I was playing rhythm guitar. I looked at Edward after I got situated and he began the introduction, along with Jasper. I came in when I began playing the guitar. I moved my hips seductively as I played my guitar. Edward sang along with me when it came time to harmonize.

*How can I decide what's right?  
When you're clouding up my mind  
Can't win your losing fight  
all the time*

*Not gonna ever own what's mine  
When you're always taking sides  
You won't take away my pride  
No, not this time  
Not this time*

*How did we get here?  
when I use to know you so well  
How did we get here?  
Well, I think I know*

Edward stared at me with lust in his eyes as he sung with me. We were experiencing the most public form of foreplay ever. I wanted to pull him backstage and make him scream my name. He looked so hot.

*The truth is hiding in your eyes  
And it's hanging on your tongue  
Just boiling in my blood,*

*But you think that I can't see*

*What kind of man that you are  
If you're a man at all  
Well, I will figure this one out  
on my own  
on my own*

*I'm screaming "I love you so..."  
But my thoughts you can't decode*

*How did we get here?  
when I use to know you so well  
How did we get here?  
Well, I think I know*

*Do you see what we've done?  
We're gonna make such fools of ourselves  
Do you see what we've done?  
We're gonna make such fools of ourselves*

*How did we get here?  
when I use to know you so well  
How did we get here?  
Well, I think I know*

As we continued the song, our eyes never leaving each other, I imagined Edward's body entwined with mine in the most intimate way. I imagined it was Edward's body underneath my fingers, not an electric guitar. I imagined that I was screaming in ecstasy as he would make me come.

*I think I know  
I think I know  
There is something I see in you  
It might kill me I want it to be true*

## La Cantante

As we finished the song, I licked my lips and raised a brow at Edward. He was breathing heavily, his eyes burning with desire. Thank God that his guitar hid his cock; the audience would have gotten good look at his erection. The crowd roared, oblivious to our musical foreplay.

We finished out our set of songs without further incident of kinky fuckery. However, I still wanted to drag him backstage and make him scream my name.

*Later, Swan! You'll get Edward, later.*

After our last song, "This is How the Heart Breaks," by Rob Thomas, Edward muttered "Thank you," into his microphone and the lights went down. We scrambled off stage. We were safely ensconced behind the curtain and the crowd was going wild. Our first performance, with me in the group, had been a rousing success. The guys all wrapped their arms around each other and we had a group hug. We pulled apart and Emmett grabbed me and swung me around like I was a rag doll.

"You were the fucking shizz, Isabelly! The best ever! I'm so proud of you!" he roared.

"Emmett...breathing...important..." I squeaked out.

"Sorry, Isabelly," he said as he put me down. "Let's head out there and see our adoring fans."

Emmett puffed his chest and strode out of the curtain. Jasper was on heels. I chuckled at them. I then felt Edward behind me. He nuzzled my hair and snaked his arms around my waist. "Did you know what you were doing to me out there, Isabella? I could barely control myself. I wanted to pull from the stage and have my way with you. You were fucking hot," he purred in my ear. "I want you."

My eyes rolled back in my head at his words. "I feel the same way, Edward. I had a fabulous view of your ass as you sang. I wanted go up and take a bite out of it. You have fine ass, Cullen. I want you. In every way possible."

## La Cantante

"As much as I want to take you out of here and go to the bed and breakfast, we probably should go say hi to our friends. Soon, baby," he said as he bit down on my ear. "Very soon I'll be making you scream in the most pleasurable way possible."

*Cannot form words. No coherent thoughts. Edward's voice is causing me to spontaneously orgasm. Fuck.*

He gave me a gentle push to get my body moving. I was still in an Edward-induced fog. I stumbled a bit but managed to get out into The Chapel without falling. Thank goodness. Alice squealed and she ran up to Edward and hopped into his arms. She wrapped her arms and legs around him, proclaiming he kicked ass. She jumped down and gave me a huge hug as well. Emmett was laughing at her antics.

"She did the same thing to me and Jasper. Except she kissed Jasper. What about my kiss, Sprite?"

"Emmett, I'm not dating you, you goon," Alice said as she kissed my cheek.

"You kissed Bella," he whined.

Alice gave me a mischievous look and started belting out "I Kissed A Girl."

*I kissed a girl and I liked it, the taste of her cherry chapstick  
I kissed a girl just to try it, I hope my boyfriend don't mind it  
It felt so wrong, it felt so right, don't mean I'm in love tonight  
I kissed a girl and I liked it, I liked it*

She then grabbed my face and kissed me firmly on the lips. Everyone's jaw dropped. Including mine.

*What. The. Fuck?*

"Not cherry...strawberry, Bella?" she asked.

## La Cantante

I blinked, in shock at what my midget roommate had just done. I squeaked as did Edward. I inched closer to him, "Edward. Your sister scares me. She just had her tongue down my throat."

"Normally, the vision of two woman kissing would turn me on, but...but...there are no words," he said. "No words, at all. PIXIE! What the fuck? Why are you making out with my girlfriend?"

"To piss Emmett off," she explained simply. "Did it work, Em?"

"Hell, no, Sprite. It turned me on. Do it again," he said.

Edward and I shared a look and we both walked up to Emmett and smacked him in the head.

"OW! Day-um! I'm kidding."

They all burst out laughing. Edward and I glared at Emmett and his foolishness. Rosalie guffawed, "Okay, Bella, which Cullen is the better kisser?"

"Edward, hands down. Sorry, Pix. I don't swing that direction," I said as I wrapped my arms around Edward.

"No biggie, Bella. I don't either. It was fun, though."

"Another thing to scratch off my bucket list," I giggled.

"What's a bucket list?" Jasper asked.

Edward chuckled. "It's a list of things that you want to do before you kick the bucket, Jas. Therefore, a 'bucket' list."

"Oh. Okay. Let's get this crap taken down, bitches," Jasper said as he kissed Alice. "I have a pixie to make out with. I need to sway her from her lesbian ways."

## La Cantante

"Oh, Christ," Edward said as he rolled his eyes. Edward gave me a brief kiss and went with Emmett and Jasper. Ben also decided to help out.

Angela, Alice, and Rosalie pounced as soon as they were out of earshot.

"Are you nervous?"

"That was hot on stage."

"When are you going?"

They all spoke at once. I took a step back and held up my hands in a defensive gesture. "Whoa. One at a time. Am I nervous? Yes. But, I know it's right. What was hot on stage? We're leaving as soon as the stage is dismantled."

"'Decode' was hot. You looked like you both wanted to jump each other," Rose said.

"That's because we do want to jump each other, Rose. I swear, this concert was musical foreplay. I'm surprised that we didn't throw down our guitars and start fucking like bunnies on stage."

"Well, have fun tonight," Alice said with a knowing smirk.

"Oh, I need your credit card, Alice," I said.

"You won't need it. Edward and Jasper actually went to check you in and he switched it to his credit card. You're all good," Alice replied.

"That's where he was. Sneaky bastard."

"You love him," Rose said simply.

"Yes, I do," I replied.

"Go jump his bones and make him squirm, Bella," Angela said with a smile.



## La Cantante

"Sounds like a plan," I said with a suggestive waggle of my brows. "Later, girlies. By this time tomorrow, my v-card will have been revoked."

*Now to make Edward scream in ecstasy. Nice.*

**A/N: Here's Breaking Midnight's set list again. Next chapter, one LONG lemon...**

**Girl's Not Grey - AFI**

**Criminal - Fiona Apple**

**Drive - Incubus**

**Flood - Jars of Clay**

**Bring Me To Life - Evanescence**

**Land of Confusion - Disturbed**

**Crazy - Alanis Morissette**

**Broken - Seether**

**The Pretender - Foo Fighters**

**Mother, Mother - Tracy Bonham**

**Carry On My Wayward Son - Kansas**

**Decode - Paramore**

**Wanted, Dead or Alive - Bon Jovi**

**Serenity - Godsmack**

La Cantante

**I Kissed A Girl - Katy Perry**

**This Is How the Heart Breaks - Rob Thomas**

# Bed and Breakfast and Bed and Bathtub

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

**LEMON ALERT!**

## **Chapter 28: Bed and Breakfast and Bed and Bathtub...**

### **BPOV**

The guys had taken down the stage and loaded up the equipment into Emmett's truck. Jasper and Emmett decided to go to the storage locker and then go back to The Chapel after they dropped off the equipment. Edward and I said our goodbyes after we finished loading up and headed to the bed and breakfast I had reserved. I grabbed my messenger bag and we walked out to the car.

It was a small place about a half hour away from Emerson. It had several small cottages that had different themes. I had booked a music themed cottage for our stay. The woman who set up the reservation was very accommodating.

Edward and I got into his car and I handed him the directions to the bed and breakfast. He programmed the address into his GPS and we were on our way.

"You did awesome tonight, Bella. I told you had nothing to worry about," he said as he brought our laced hands to his lips.

"Thank you, handsome. I guess I had a huge case of the jitters," I said with a smile.

## La Cantante

"I'm so happy that you're in the band with us. You really add so much to the sound," he said as he glanced my direction. "I love you, baby."

"I love you too. However, you have some explaining to do," I said, pulling my hand away.

"What did I do?" he asked.

"Alice told me."

"Shit," he mumbled. "Bella. It didn't feel right with you getting this beautiful bed and breakfast thing set up. Alice told me that you used her credit card to reserve the room. I called the woman and switched it to mine. I checked us in earlier today and brought some stuff. I hope you don't mind, beautiful."

"Edward, I wanted to do this. For you. For us!"

"Baby, I'm sorry. I'm kind of old fashioned that way. Please don't be mad," he pouted. "Pretty please."

His brow was furrowed and his bottom lip was juttet out. He looked so pathetic. He then began fluttering his eyelashes and moving his bottom lip. "Okay, that's just pitiful, Edward. I forgive you. Jeez."

He immediately perked back up and starting bouncing in his seat. I rolled my eyes and shook my head. I laced my fingers with his and we sped along the highway to the bed and breakfast.

*Soon and very soon, Bella. My girlie bits just cannot wait!*

xx LC xx

We arrived at the bed and breakfast. Edward parked his car in front of the cottage that I reserved. He took out the key from his pocket and gave me a smile. He got out of the car and sprinted to my side of the car to open the car door for me. I got out and I immediately started trembling.

## La Cantante

*What's with the nerves tonight, Bella? This is EDWARD. He won't hurt you.*

Edward went to the back seat of the car and pulled out my messenger bag, his duffel bag and my duffel.

*What the hell?*

"Alice packed a bag for you. She said she filled it with all of the 'essentials.' Whatever that means," he said as he gestured to my bag.

*Meddlesome pixie...*

Edward walked to me and laced his fingers with mine. He looked at me with so much love and sincerity, I wanted to cry. He kissed each of my knuckles and we walked up to the cottage. Edward clicked open the door and ushered us inside.

The cottage was exactly what I imagined. It had a large room with a king-sized bed that dominated it. It was a huge four poster bed with black and white musical bedding with red accents. On the red walls were various photos, paintings and sculptures about or depicting music. There was a fireplace that was lit and it basked the room in a cozy glow. Facing the bed was a sleek black leather sofa and a small coffee table. To the right of the bed was a door leading to the bathroom. It had slate tiles on the walls and floors with musical paraphernalia adorning the walls as well.

Edward led me into the cottage and placed our bags onto the bed. He took out a small lighter out of his pocket and lit several candles surrounding the room, adding to the romantic feel. He slipped off his jacket and placed it on the couch. He went to remove my jacket and when his fingers touched my skin, it ignited. I gasped at the ferocity of the tingle his touch caused.

"What's wrong, Bella? You're trembling," he said in quiet murmur.

"Another case of the jitters, Edward," I said turning to face him.

## La Cantante

"If you're not ready, beautiful. I understand. We can just enjoy this beautiful cottage, being alone," he said as he brushed a tendril of hair from my face. The gesture was so sweet, yet so intimate.

"I'm ready, Edward. I'm ready to be yours and only yours. I love you so much," I said, my voice thick with emotion. I laid my hands on his muscled chest.

"I love you so much more, Isabella. You are my life now. I will do anything to be with you, to keep you, to protect you," he said reverently, gazing into my eyes. He leaned down and brushed his lips with mine. An angel's kiss. I sighed at his tenderness. He moved his lips and pressed gentle kisses on my cheeks, my forehead, the crown of my hair, and along my jaw. His hands gently caressed my face, mirroring the path of his kisses. "I promised you, Bella. I promised that when we made love, I would worship every inch of your body. I intend to follow through with that promise. I love you and cherish you, beautiful. You are the most important person in my life."

I moved my hands up his chest, over his strong and broad shoulders and finally rested in his bronze hair. "As you are the most important person in my life. Thank you for everything, Edward. I am truly blessed to have you," I said as I brought his face to mine. I placed a tender kiss on his soft lips. He moaned and I slipped my tongue into his warm mouth. Edward slowly moved us closer to the large bed in the room. His hands had slowly moved from my face, down my sides and rested on my hips. We continued to kiss each other languidly. Our tongues moved slowly within each other's mouths. Edward's hands moved up and down my back, running his hand through my long hair. I gently caressed his face and moved my other hand to his right hip, to where his tattoo was located. I idly traced the outline of the tattoo over his clothes.

Edward moved his hands down my sides of my body and reached the hem of my shirt. He unhurriedly lifted the hem of my t-shirt and lifted it over my head. His eyes widened at my bra that I was wearing. I had on the black bra with red bows on it. It pushed my breasts up and created a lovely effect on my body. He ran his hands over my torso, ghosting over the tops of my breasts. "You're so beautiful, Bella." He leaned down and peppered kisses along my collarbones and breasts. I rolled my head back and moaned at his reverent touch. His other

## La Cantante

hand snaked up my body and rested on the back of my neck. He moved his kisses up to my neck, where he suckled on the soft skin.

I reached for his shirt, removing it from his jeans. I slipped my hands underneath his tight shirt and ran my fingers over the grooves of his muscles on his belly. I felt the muscles contract under my fingers. I pulled his shirt up and removed it from his lean body. He then moved us to the bed. He lay me down on my back as we kissed and he settled between my legs. He rolled his hips and I could feel his erection where I wanted it the most. He reached down and quickly removed my shoes and his before returning to his spot between my legs. I was moving my hips and body against his, grinding against his bulge in his jeans. He moaned and moved his kisses to my chest.

He rolled his body so I was straddling his waist. His hands snaked up my body to the clasp of my bra. He released it and gently pulled the bra from my chest. He brought his hands up to my breasts and tenderly cupped them. With his fingers, he lightly rolled the nipples. I threw my head back with pleasure and swiveled my hips. He leaned in and drew one breast into his mouth and nibbled on the nipple with his teeth. His other hand continued fondling and toying with other breast. "You feel so good, Bella. You fit perfectly in my hands."

"Oh, Edward. I love your hands on me," I breathed. "Please don't stop."

"Never, beautiful," he said as he looked up at me. He reached behind me and unzipped my skirt. He stood up and placed me on the floor. He pulled down my skirt and tights with one motion. I stepped out of them and I was left with my black, lacy thong. He ghosted his hands up my legs, teasing me by lightly rubbing my core. He then reached down and grabbed my ass. He gasped when he realized that I was wearing a thong. His hands held firm on my ass and he lifted me. I instinctively wrapped my legs around his waist, linking my feet around his back. He turned us around and he laid me back down on the bed. He pulled away and gazed at me. I heard mutter "beautiful" and "perfect" as he kissed his way down my body. He nibbled from hipbone to hipbone. He inhaled deeply after he had done so.

## La Cantante

"You smell so good, Bella. I can never get tired of it," he breathed against my skin.

"Ungh!" I cried. I raised my hands and pulled my hair. His words and his voice were causing my body to tremble.

He traced his hand up my leg and reached the edge of my panties. He pulled them aside and ran his finger along my slick folds. "So wet for me, Bella." He removed his finger and gently pulled the panties down. He crumpled them into a ball and put them into the pocket of his jeans.

My eyes widened at what he just did. He whispered "A memento."

*Edward Cullen, panty thief.*

He dropped to his knees and spread my legs with his hands. His eyes widened at what lay before him. I was completely bare, save for a strip of hair. He blew lightly on my heated core. It felt so good. My hips bucked reflexively at the sensation. He then leaned in and licked the length of my slit. He drew my clit into his mouth and sucked. He put one finger into me and I moaned in delight.

"So vocal tonight, Bella," he said as he continued to kiss me. "I like it."

"Does it turn you on Edward? To know how much I love what you do to me?"

"Immensely, beautiful."

He slipped a second finger into me and my hips began rocking. I could feel the delightful coil in my belly of imminent release. He nibbled on my clit and he pumped his hand harder. "Tastes so good." He flipped his hand and curled his fingers inside of me. My orgasm came hard and fast. The spring was released and I screamed. Edward continued his ministrations as I rode out my orgasm.

He pulled away as I calmed down, twitching in ecstasy. He removed his fingers and I grabbed his hand. I drew his fingers into my mouth, swirling my tongue around them. His darkened with desire and he plunged his tongue into my



## La Cantante

mouth. As he kissed me, I pushed his shoulder and rolled him onto his back. I reached down and undid the buckle of his jeans.

"You're wearing too many clothes, Edward," I cooed. He swatted me off his lap and he unbuttoned his jeans and slid them and his boxers down. He was gloriously naked now. His tattoo contrasted with his body and I never realized how beautiful it really was. He crawled up the bed and he pinned me with his body. His eyes looked almost feral.

"Are you sure you want this, Isabella?"

"Very sure, Edward. I've never wanted anything more. I want to feel you," I pleaded. "Please."

He pushed me back into the pillows and he reached down between my legs. "Still so wet, Bella. Do you realize what you do to me? I want you so badly."

"I'm yours, Edward. Yours forever and always," I said as I kissed him.

He lined up his cock with my entrance, the tip nuzzling it. He reached down and angled my hips. He slowly thrust his hips forward, my body accommodating his size. I felt like I would break in to two pieces, but it felt so good. He pushed in further. I could see the concentration on his face and the sweat on his forehead. He reached my barrier.

"This is going to hurt, beautiful. I'm so sorry," he whispered. He reached up and caressed my cheek.

"Please, Edward. I need to you feel you. All the way."

He pushed with a little more strength and I felt my barrier break away. It burned and I squeaked at the sensation.

"I'm sorry, Bella. So sorry, baby! I love you so much," he said as he filled me completely. He stayed there for a moment, not moving. "Are you okay?"

## La Cantante

"I'm fine. It hurts a little, but I'm okay. I love you too. You can move," I said gazing up into his piercing eyes.

He pulled back and entered me again. He was still moving slowly. Edward thrust his hips gently. I felt full, complete. I felt like I was home. "Bella, you feel so good. So tight. I'm not going to last." His thrusting sped up and I could feel my release coming. Edward grabbed one of my legs and pulled it back and he was able to thrust deeper. With each thrust, I was closer to my second release. I reached down with my hand and began rubbing my clit.

"Fuck, that's so hot, Bella," he said as he picked up speed.

"Edward, you feel so good. Faster, baby," I groaned.

His hips moved more quickly and I moved my body, grinding on his cock, my hand still rubbing my clit. My coil was deliciously close to springing. "Let go, Bella. Come with me," he grunted. He drove into me harder and my muscles clamped down on his cock. He gave out a strangled cry and he thrust in two more times before he spilled into me. He released my leg and I withdrew my hand. He pulled out of me and I immediately felt empty. We both whimpered at the loss.

He rolled onto his back and pulled me to him. I nestled on his sweaty chest. "I love you so much Bella. I feel honored that you gave me that gift."

"I love you, too. I am so glad I could give it to you. Thank you for being so gentle," I murmured sleepily against his chest. Edward scrambled out of bed and pulled down the comforter. After, he ran into the bathroom and got a washcloth. He ran in under some warm water. He gently nudged my legs apart and he ran the washcloth between them. The warmth felt good over my sore skin. I crawled underneath the comforter and cuddled against his chest after he came back to bed. Our breathing had slowed down from our exertions.

"Sleep now beautiful. I can imagine you're tired. I know that I am. I love you, *il mio cantante*."

## La Cantante

"I love you too, Edward," I mumbled, my eyelids drooping. I hazily remembered Edward humming my lullaby as I drifted to sleep.

xx LC xx

Something's tickling me. My eyes were closed and I felt feather light touches along my sides. There was also a silky touch that was rubbing along my belly.

*What is that?*

I slowly opened my eyes and then I realized it was Edward. He was pressing kisses along my ribcage and his hair was rubbing my stomach. I moved my hands and ran my fingers through his mussed up tresses. He hummed against my skin and nipped my ribs.

It was still dark out. The fire had burnt out and the only light in the room was the few candles that Edward had lit earlier. Edward looked up from my chest and laid his head on my bare stomach, looking up at me.

"I love you, Bella."

"I love you too, Edward. Why aren't you asleep?"

"The beautiful woman that is sharing the bed with me has a tendency to grope me in my sleep," he said, with laughter in his eyes.

I covered my face with my hands, completely embarrassed. "What did I do?"

He pulled away my hands and laced his fingers with mine. "You were laying on my belly and your hand found its way to my cock and you were giving me a hand job, while completely unconscious."

"I'm sorry. Did I hurt you?" I asked, panicking.

"No. It felt really good. However, I don't think you waking up to handful of spooge would have felt too good," he chuckled. "It was very difficult moving

away from your hand."

I ran my fingers down his cheek and my eyes darkened. "I can finish what I started, handsome. Only I'll be conscious this time," I purred.

He raised his head from my stomach and moved up my body. He gave me a searing kiss, plunging his tongue into my open mouth. My hands traveled down his body and rested on his firm behind, pulling his hips to my body. I could feel his cock grow hard between our bodies. He rolled us and I was on top, my legs entwined with his.

I dragged my hands up Edward's torso, scratching his smooth skin along the way. He hissed at my more aggressive contact. One of hands gripped my hip and the other was twisted in my hair, holding my face to his.

"I don't want your hand, Isabella. I want you. I want your wet pussy," he growled.

*Hello, Sexward. Coming out to play?*

"How badly do you want it, Edward?" I hissed. I swiveled my hips and I could feel his cock get harder.

"Please, Bella. I need you," he pleaded, his eyes begging me.

I lifted my body off his and scooted backwards so I was straddling his waist, his cock at my entrance. He reached down with his hand and rolled my clit with his fingers. I rotated my hips, coating his dick with my juices. He groaned and threw his head back. His other hand moved to my breast and he squeezed it. I slowly lowered myself onto his enormous cock. Edward's eyes widened and his mouth opened slightly.

"Fuck. That feels amazing!" he breathed.

I kept moving slowly until I filled to the hilt with Edward. I was breathing erratically. He was perfect, in every way. He fit into me like he was created just

## La Cantante

for me. I locked eyes with him. I laced my fingers with his and pushed his arms above his head. I leaned forward and gave him a kiss as I began moving up and down. His hips moving in conjunction with mine.

I sat back up and swiveled my hips. Edward's hands moved to my hips and guided their movement.

"Sit back, Bella," he said tightly.

I gave him a look and did what he asked. In this position, he went deeper. One of his hands went to my clit and he rolled it with his fingers. I reached back behind me and I gently massaged his balls as I continued moving. My muscles were getting tight. My breath was coming in short pants.

"Edward, you feel so good. I love the way you feel inside me," I panted out.

"I love being inside you, Bella. I'm close. Come with me beautiful," he replied, his voice strained. He guided my hips at a faster pace, his own hips matching mine. I could feel my muscles clench around his cock and Edward's face began to contort. "Baby...I'm going..." I felt his dick twitch and spilled in me. I came soon after, screaming Edward's name. I leaned forward and collapsed on his chest, breathing heavily.

"No words...there are absolutely no words," I muttered against his sweaty torso.

"Tell me about it, beautiful. You've got to be sore," he said with concern. He guided me off his cock and he was right. I was very sore. I winced at the separation and the mild pain I felt between my legs. "I'm sorry, beautiful."

"It's alright, baby. I enjoy this type of sore," I giggled.

"Sleep. I need sleep. You're sucking me dry, beautiful. We'll take a bath together and that should help with the soreness tomorrow morning. I love you," Edward said as he yawned.

## La Cantante

"I love you too," I said. I rolled onto my side and Edward pulled me to his chest. He put his arm behind my head and the other arm around my belly, spooning me. I never felt so happy. So content. So safe. I was home.

xx LC xx

Edward and I woke up relatively early the next morning. We had to head back to campus because University Singers were singing at the football game today. We were singing the National Anthem and the Alma Mater. After the game there was a dance at a local banquet hall. Originally, we all had decided not to go. However, Alice, in her infinite wisdom, proclaimed that we needed to go. So, we were going.

I was still in bed when I heard Edward puttering around the room. I could faintly hear the sounds of a pencil scratching on some paper and some light humming. I opened my eyes and I saw Edward, sitting on the couch, wearing a pair of basketball shorts and shirtless.

I sat up and pulled the comforter around my body, "What you doing, handsome?" I asked as I rubbed my face. I probably looked like a raccoon. I didn't wash my face and my makeup was probably everywhere.

*Very attractive. He'll probably dump your ass.*

"I got an idea for a song and I wanted to jot it down. You brought in your messenger bag and I swiped some staff paper from you. I hope you don't mind," he said with a crooked smirk. Or at least I think it was a crooked smirk. I couldn't really tell. I was blind as a bat. I woke up in the middle of the night and threw out my contacts because they were bugging me. Edward laughed as he saw me squint. He reached into my bag and pulled out my glasses case and brought it to the bed. "Here you go. Seeing is probably a good thing."

"Thanks, Edward," I said dryly. I put my glasses on and Edward disappeared around the corner, into the bathroom. I heard some water running. Edward came out with a robe in his hands. He held it up for me to put on.

"It's a bit chilly in the cottage. I don't want you to get sick, beautiful." I pulled my arms through the sleeves of the plush robe and tied it around my waist. Edward offered me his hand and I got out of bed. My foot caught on the bedding and I crashed into Edward. It must have caught him off guard as we ended up in a tangle of limbs on the floor. He managed to cushion my fall with his body, landing on his back. "Ow! My ass and my head," he cried.

"Shit! Edward! Are you okay?" I asked as I scrambled up to inspect his head.

"I'm fine. I should wrap you in bubble wrap," he said sarcastically, sitting up rubbing his head.

"Sorry, Edward," I mumbled, sitting on my heels. I fiddled with a loose string on the robe and refused to look Edward in the eyes.

"Bella. Look at me," he said gently. I still refused to look up. "Look. At. Me. I love you, klutziness and all. You just caught me off balance. I'm fine."

I nodded and scrambled to stand up. I reached my hands down to help Edward off of the ground. He took them and I hefted him up. He released one of my hands and we headed into the bathroom. Edward checked the bathtub and it was almost filled. It was a Jacuzzi tub. He walked over to the tub and slipped off his shorts. He was naked underneath.

*He has the most perfect body. How did I get so lucky? I dating a Greek God. Damn.*

He slipped into the water. I took off the robe and got in as well. I began to sit down and I hissed at the pain in between my legs. I was really sore. Edward looked at me with a frown. I gave him a smile, kind of. He pulled me to him and I settled between his legs. He turned some knobs and the jets of the Jacuzzi began going. Edward was leaning against the wall of the tub and I was leaning against Edward. His hands were rubbing my arms and slowly moving up to my shoulders. He began massaging my back and shoulders.

"Damn, Bella. Your back is riddled with knots," he commented.

## La Cantante

"I carry all of my stress in my back and shoulders. I've been a little stressed lately with the situation with Jacob, my gimpiness and the concert last night," I said, shrugging my shoulders.

"Didn't the girls give you a gift certificate to a spa or something? They have massage therapists there, don't they?" he asked as he ran his hands on either side of my spine.

"Um, I already went to the spa. I went on Thursday. I got my haircut, manicure, pedicure and a bikini wax," I mumbled.

"I definitely like the bikini wax, baby," he growled. "However, you're probably too sore for me to show you how much I like the bikini wax." He snaked his hand down my torso and rolled my clit with his fingers. It felt good. I groaned and leaned my head back and arched my back.

"I'm probably too sore for actual sex..." I began. He didn't let me finish my thought before his other hand cupped my jaw and turned my head so he could kiss me.

"You are so fucking sexy, Bella," he said as he continued his ministrations with my clit. "Sit on the edge of the tub, beautiful."

I got out of the tub and sat on the edge, towards the back corner of the bathroom. My body responded to the change of temperature. My nipples hardened and my skin was raised in gooseflesh. Edward moved to his knees and pushed my legs apart. He pressed kisses up my inner thighs. With each kiss, he moved closer to my core. He reached his hands and pulled me to the very edge of the tub and gently pushed my body back against the wall. "I love to watch you do this to me," he said with a smirk, "Look in the mirror, beautiful and you can watch me do this to you."

I looked up and I saw my reflection in the bathroom mirror. Edward's strong back to the mirror, his muscles outlined by the water dripping off his body. His face in between my legs. I could feel myself get wetter. He looked up at me through his lashes and he ran his tongue along my clit. The cold I was feeling



earlier was gone. It was replaced with heat. I thrust my hips at his tender caress of his tongue.

"Watch yourself beautiful. See how gorgeous you are when you come," he murmured against my thigh. He took another languid lick of my clit, pulling it into his teeth. My hips began rocking with his ministrations. My breath was erratic. I looked at the mirror and I was so turned on. That was not me. I reached my hands up to my breasts and I pinched my nipples.

"Edward, that feels so good. I love your tongue on me," I moaned as my hips moved at a frantic pace. He looked up at me and he thrust his tongue into my entrance, using his long elegant fingers to play with my clit.

I threw my head back and squeezed my breasts. "Edward, I want you. I need you inside me. Please," I begged. "I want to come around your cock."

He pulled away his face and stood up. He picked me and wrapped my legs around his waist, pinning me to the wall. He thrust in me with a grunt. I screamed.

"Shit! You are so wet, Bella."

He swiveled his hips and held tight to my waist. My back was against the wall, with my hands in his damp hair. "Harder, Edward. I want to feel all of you."

He lowered us back to the edge of the tub. "Turn around beautiful. Put your knees on the edge." I did as he asked and he slipped into me from behind. "Christ that feels so good, baby. I love you, Bella," he said as he drove into me. He grabbed my hip with one hand and his other hand slipped to my breast. I reached down and I began to pinch my clit. I could feel him entering my body. I reached further down my body and caressed his balls. I could feel my muscles bunch and my moans became louder.

"I want to feel you come, Edward. I'm close, baby." He grabbed my other hip with his hand and pummeled into me harder. My walls clamped down onto his cock and I screamed. I felt his dick twitch and he poured into me with a loud

grunt.

Edward pulled out and sank back into the lukewarm water, dragging me with him. I was sitting on his lap, trying to calm my breathing. He was doing the same. He tenderly ran his fingers through my damp hair and nuzzled my neck.

"I love you, beautiful. Thank you."

"I love you more, handsome. Thank *you*," I replied as I kissed his nose.

"You are insatiable, woman. I've created a monster," he chuckled.

"I'll only want to do that with you, baby. Ever."

"Me, too, Bella. We're young and still in college. But I promise you, I will propose, we will get married and have twenty children."

"Excuse me?" I squeaked. "Twenty chil...did you just say twenty children? Tell me you did not just say twenty children. I'm not MaryJo Duggar, or whatever her name is."

"Eighteen?"

"Be serious, Edward. I'm thinking two, maybe three tops. I'm not a baby making machine, you know," I said as I swatted him on the chest. "Doesn't mean we have to stop practicing making babies. Practicing's fun."

"Insatiable, Ms. Swan. Completely insatiable."

"Only for you, Mr. Cullen. I don't know about you, but I'm turning into a prune and getting quite cold," I said as I shivered.

"Me too. I'm experiencing shrinkage," he said. "Let's head back to reality."

"Do we have to? Can't we just stay here in this musical little cottage and make love like bunnies?"

## La Cantante

"Yes, we have to leave. As much as I want to stay here and fuck you fifty ways to Sunday, it's just not possible. However, we will come back here. I promise."

"I suppose," I grumbled. I got up from his lap and grabbed a towel. I wrapped it around my body and handed Edward the other towel. He wrapped his around his waist. I picked up the bathrobe and pulled it on. I finished my regular morning routine as Edward did his. I caught his eye in the mirror and gave him a bright smile.

"What are you smiling at, Bella?"

"You. How lucky I am."

"I'm the lucky one, beautiful. We do need to get going though. I'll let you finish up in here. I'll load up the car," he said as he quickly ran a hand through his hair. I stopped him before he left. I sat on the counter of the bathroom and grabbed the pomade from his toiletry bag. I rubbed some into my hands and ran it through his hair. He looked at me with such adoration as I took care of him. "I'm definitely the lucky one. I love you Isabella Swan."

"I love you more, Edward Cullen."

He gave me a chaste kiss before exiting the bathroom, allowing me to finish my routine. I quickly put on some light make up. I pulled my hair into a side ponytail. I finished my look with my glasses. I walked out to the main room of the cottage and dug into my duffel bag that Alice had packed for me. I pulled out my underwear and bra and slipped them on under my robe. I pulled on a pair of khakis and a light blue polo shirt that all the women from University Singers were wearing for our performance for the National Anthem and Alma Mater at the homecoming game. I also slipped on my ankle brace and a pair of brown clogs.

Edward, who was gone when I got out of the bathroom, had come back in. He was wearing his navy blue polo and khakis like the men were supposed to wear for University Singers. He had on a pair sunglasses propped up in his hair and a pair of brown Doc Martens. I dashed back into the bathroom and grabbed my

## La Cantante

toiletory bag and Edward's bag and put them into my duffel. I quickly sprayed myself with some body spray and was ready to go. Edward held up my jacket and I slipped my arms through the sleeves. He wound his arms around my waist and nuzzled my neck and blew a raspberry into my cheek. I reached back and pinched him on his side.

"Ready to head back?" he asked as he laced my fingers with his.

"No, but let's go anyway. Back to reality."

*Back to reality, indeed.*

**A/N: Just a reminder, Bella is on the shot. There will be no accidental pregnancies. Also, I was really nervous writing this chapter. It was a tough one for me. I hope I captured the love that Edward wanted to give Bella in the initial lemon. Leave a review and let me know.**

# Homecoming Excitement

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 29: Homecoming Excitement

### EPOV

After such a perfect concert, night, morning, bath, everything, Bella and I drove back to Emerson. A small smile was on her lips, as was on mine. I was in awe of her. She was the best thing that ever happened to me. She was the reason of my existence. She made me truly happy. Her gift of her virtue made my heart swell. The fact that she trusted me, loved me enough to give such a precious gift gave me tingles.

We were nearly back to campus when Bella's phone rang. Her brow furrowed as she looked at the caller ID.

"Anybody you know? Not the unknown caller again?" I asked.

"No. I think it's one of the detectives. Hello?" she asked tentatively. She listened intently to what the caller had to say. Her hand grasped mine. I mouthed "What?" She held up a finger, indicating for me to wait. I held my breath until she got off the phone. She thanked whoever was on the phone and hung up.

"That was Detective Lutz. They worked with the District Attorney in Port Angeles to get a subpoena of the users of the internet café there. Jacob wasn't one of them. However, he mentioned someone that I knew. He said that Leah Clearwater used one of the computers on the day the email was sent. She's always had a crush on Jacob for as long as I could remember. She's a few years

## La Cantante

older than me and has a brother, Seth, who is my age. He decided to go to college in the area. Detective Lutz suspects that it could be her who sent the email. Nothing is concrete, they did a good job erasing their tracks," Bella said, her voice wavering.

"This is good news, though. We know that it is Jacob and not some random schmo off the street. What else did Detective Lutz say?" I asked as I kissed her palm.

"He said that there was nothing more we could do unless they physically threaten or harm me. He also reiterated to contact him or Det. Raisor if anything else happens."

"Nothing else is going to happen, baby. I'll protect you. I love you."

"I love you too Edward," she said quietly, tears gathering in her eyes.

"Don't cry, sweetheart. Nothing is going to happen," I said as I pulled into the parking spot at Patterson. "Nothing."

She nodded and gave me a tentative smile. I gently cupped her face, tenderly rubbing her cheek. I leaned in and kissed her on the forehead. She let out a deep breath and put her head on my shoulder, linking her arm with mine. I rested my own head on top of hers. We would get through this. The asshole, Jacob, would not continue to control our lives. He would not fuck with Bella. He would not fuck with me.

*His ass is toast if he ever sees me. Stupid dog! Good-for-nothing mongrel.*

I kissed the crown of her head and pulled away. We couldn't just sit in the car all morning. I opened the car door and gathered our bags. Bella gracefully got out of the passenger side and walked over to me. She took her messenger bag from my hands and slipped it over her body. We walked toward Patterson and Bella swiped her card to let us into the building. I held open the door and we walked up to her room. I gave her an innocent kiss as I dropped her duffel onto her bed. Alice and Rose were literally trembling with anticipation. I told Bella

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that I would pick them up at noon to head to Brandon. University Singers were to meet as a large group to warm up and rehearse before performing the National Anthem and the Alma Mater at the Homecoming Game. I was barely down the hall before I heard Alice squeal. I laughed as I walked out into the common area and headed up to my room.

I ascended the stairs and I was happy with what happened between Bella and me, but fearful of what Emmett might think. I knew he accepted our relationship. I am pretty certain that he knew that we fooled around. I was not sure how he would react to the new level our relationship had grown into.

When Jasper told me that he and Alice had sex, I was a little pissed. However, my sister was an adult and it was her decision and Jasper's decision to have sex. I gave him grief about being safe and he said that they practiced safe sex. I was happy for Jasper and that he found what he was looking for with my sister. Emmett had watched the whole interaction and was shocked at how calm I was about the whole situation. I'm not one to completely flip my lid. It takes a lot. I mean A LOT to get me pissed off to where I am yelling and threatening people's lives. A crazy, stalker ex-boyfriend gets me that mad.

I walked into my dorm room and I saw Jasper and Emmett playing Xbox. They were yelling at each other's characters, both standing in front of the couch. I skulked in and dropped my bag onto my bed and pulled my dirty laundry to put in the hamper. I took my jeans, shirt and underwear and tossed into the basket in my closet. I saw some black material peaking out of the pocket of my jeans I remembered that I had swiped Bella's panties.

*I can't believe I did that. These are so going in my bottom drawer. I never pegged myself as a panty thief.*

I plucked the panties out of my pocket and tossed them in the bottom drawer of my dresser, underneath a bunch of t-shirts. I prayed that Emmett did not see that. If he sees me with his sister's underwear, for certain my balls would breaded, sautéed and fed as a rare delicacy to me on a plate of spaghetti. I also took out the staff paper that had my new song ideas jotted down. I stuck them in my folder for music theory. I would add them to Finale, a music composition

software program, later.

"Hey Edward," Jasper said as he waved from the couch. He and Emmett had calmed down and were sitting now. "How did things go last night?" he asked with a knowing smile.

"How did what things go last night?" Emmett asked, scratching his head.

"Uh, nothing, Emmett. Don't worry about it," I said hurriedly. I ran my hands through my hair in frustration.

"Bullshit, Cullen. You're hiding something. You're pulling your hair out. You will be bald by twenty-one if you keep that up," Emmett said.

"I'm not hiding something, Em," I said, removing my hands from my hair, jamming them into my pockets.

He turned and looked at me. He saw the guilty expression on my face. I caved, "Bella and me went to a bed and breakfast last night after our concert."

"Okay," he said, turning back to the game.

"Okay?" I questioned.

"Isabelly is capable of making her own decisions. As are you, Cullen. You have deemed yourself worthy of dating my sister, kissing my sister and now fucking my sister. As long as you don't get her pregnant, we're cool. Well, you get her pregnant after you get married, because I want a niece or nephew to spoil," he said calmly. "You did use protection, right?"

"Um, who are you and what have you done with Emmett Swan? The raging lunatic who said he we feed me my own testicles if I 'fucked' his sister?" I gaped.

"I'm here. Trust me. I will not hesitate on feeding you your balls if you hurt her. She's an adult; you're an adult; you're both capable of making adult



decisions. Protection?"

"She's on the shot, Em. I'm good," I sputtered.

"No condom? When was the last time you were tested? You did sleep with Skankya," he reasoned.

"I had a physical over the summer with a full battery of tests, including an STD screening. I'm clean, Em," I said with an eye roll.

"Okay, good."

I was pretty certain my jaw was scraping the floor. Emmett didn't pummel me. He didn't give me shit. He actually talked to me like a rational human being. I was floored.

"Un-fucking-believable," I said as I sat down on my bed. Emmett and Jasper looked at each other and started laughing hysterically.

"So, was it all hearts and flowers and shit?" Emmett asked between snickers.

"Emmett, this is YOUR SISTER you're talking about. Jeez!"

"I'm asking for gory details, Cullen. I am asking was it special. She is my sister. I don't know if she's a screamer or not if likes..."

"Enough! Em, you have no tact. To answer your question is very special. I've told Bella this and now I'm telling you. She's the last woman I'll ever make love to. She's it for me," I said, leaning forward on my knees.

"Whoa, Ed. Are you talking marriage?" Jasper asked.

"Yes, lobster-boy. I'm talking marriage. I'm not proposing tomorrow but I intend to. I never felt this way about anyone in my life. We have this deeper connection. When we touch, a current runs through our bodies. It happens all of the time. She's it for me. I can feel it in my heart, my mind and my soul," I

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said looking at my roommates.

"That's deep, Edward. You should write cards for Hallmark," Emmett chuckled.

"Okay, Tweedle-Dum and Tweedle-Dummer," I smirked. "How was the rest of the party? Did my sister make out with any more girls?"

Jasper snorted. "No, though that was hot. I never knew she was so open-minded."

"That's Alice for you. She'll keep you on your toes," I chortled.

"After the party, Rosie and I went out for dinner. We went to McFinnigans. She's really sweet. Not to mention hot as fuck," Emmett said.

"Rosie?" I asked.

"Yeah. She didn't seem to mind it. However, she was pretty jumpy," Emmett said.

"You know why, don't you, Em?" I asked tentatively.

"Yeah, she told me. I want to kill those fuckers for doing it to her. She's an amazing girl. We're actually going to the dance tonight as each other's date. However, Rosie said no funny business."

"That's great, Em. I'm happy for you," I said as I checked my watch. "Jas, we gotta go. We have to head to Brandon for warm-up and a brief rehearsal before the game."

"Yeah, yeah. Let me just get dressed and we'll get the girls," he said as he got up from the couch. He went and grabbed his cargo pants, navy blue polo and shoes and went into the bathroom. He walked out five minutes later, dressed and ready to go. Emmett got up and went to the bathroom. He had his athletic trainer gear in his hands. I snagged my sunglasses and keys from my desk.

Jasper and I walked down to Bella's room.

The girls were dressed and ready to go. Bella had put in her contact lenses, as she had a pair of sunglasses on her head. Alice and Rose were putting on their shoes as we walked in. I gave Bella a kiss and pinched her ass. She jumped and attacked my sides with her fingers. I maneuvered out of the way before she could tickle me. I raised my brow. She pulled her lip into her teeth and looked at me, desire in her eyes. I leaned down to her and whispered "You know what that does to me, don't you beautiful?"

"The same thing your crooked smirk does to me, Edward. It makes me want to jump your bones," she purred.

I pulled her flush with my body, "We've done of jumping of each other's bones for now, beautiful. Later."

"Promise?" she said as she pulled her lip back into her teeth.

"Abso-fucking-lutely," I replied, removing her lip from her teeth with my thumb and lightly licking it with my tongue.

"Okay, stop it you two. You've fucked and now you're insatiable. We get it. You can screw like bunny rabbits after the dance tonight. Let's go," Alice bossed.

Bella and I looked in each other's eyes. I quirked a brow and she smiled. I kissed her. "Later, I promise," I whispered against her lips.

"Yay," she replied, biting on my bottom lip. I adjusted myself, subtly and Bella giggled. She pulled away, dropping her sunglasses onto her nose and intertwining her fingers with mine. We walked out of Patterson, completely oblivious in our little love-bubble.

*It's official. We're the cavity-inducing, wholly insatiable, nauseating couple. I fucking loved it.*

xx LC xx

Alice, Jasper, Rose, Bella and I got to Brandon and got into our usual spots for University Singers. Eleazar began a brief vocal warm up. He then explained what was going to be happening for the football game; how we would be standing, what the flow of the program was going to be and what to do when we were finished. He then had us sing the National Anthem, the same arrangement that we had sung as a small ensemble. He spot checked a few places and then we performed the Alma Mater. After our half-hour rehearsal, we all walked down to the football stadium and huddled on the track by the field.

It was chilly. Eleazar had emphasized that we needed to wear our polos with khakis. Bella was sidled up next to me. She was shivering. I wrapped my arms around her, rubbing her back and arms, trying to warm her up. Even though it was cold, the sun was shining. The sun made Bella's hair look almost red. I found myself running my fingers through her ponytail just to see the sunlight play on her hair.

We lined up in our formation for the National Anthem and Alma Mater on the track. The section leaders were situated in the front of the group. I was next to Bella, on the end. Tyler was on her other side. Alice, Rose and Jasper were immediately behind Bella and me. We walked out onto the field and stood in front of the two microphones. I walked to one of the mics and asked for the crowd to rise for singing of the National Anthem. I used my pitch pipe to give our tonic note; it was louder than Bella's voice. Eleazar gave us our cue and we entered singing. We sang through the Star Spangled Banner. The crowd cheered. We then broke into the Alma Mater when the cheering had died down. After our five minute performance, we walked off of the field and headed back to our dorms. Some of the choir members stayed for the game, but Alice wanted to make sure that Bella and Rose looked fantastic for the dance tonight. She dashed off with them; right after Bella leaned on her toes to give me a kiss. Jasper shook his head.

"Oh, Alice," he sighed.

## La Cantante

"She's a force of nature, that one," I chuckled. As I watched their retreating forms, an idea popped into my head. "Do you know what color Alice's dress is?"

"I haven't the foggiest idea. What are you thinking of, Eddie-boy?" Jasper said as he threw his arm around my shoulders.

"Well, Jazzy, I'm thinking corsages. Sounds cheesy, but I think the girls would love them," I said, putting my arm around his waist.

"By Jove! That's brilliant, man! Why do we need to know what color their dresses are?" he asked.

"So it won't clash with what they're wearing, you dolt. I swear, you spend too much time cow-tipping in Texas than thinking," I chuckled.

"Shut it, Cullen," he said, rolling his eyes.

Emmett was walking toward us, holding something. "Hey guys, someone dropped their sunglasses on the field while you were singing. Can I give them to you?" he asked holding a pair of shades. I held out my hand and slipped them into my pocket.

"Jasper and I are thinking of getting our ladies a corsage for the dance tonight. Do you want us to pick one up for Rose?" I asked.

"Hells yeah! I think she'll love that romantic shit," he boomed. "I'll pay you when I'm done with the game. Pick up whatever you think she'll like, okay?"

"Got it, Em. Have fun," I said with a smile. I took my phone out of my pocket and sent Bella a text.

*Hey, beautiful - E*

*Edward, I've been gone a grand total of five minutes. - B*

## La Cantante

*LOL. There's a reason for the text, sexy girl. - E*

*What's that, handsome? - B*

*What color are your dresses. Yours, Alice's and Rose's - E*

*Mine is purple, Alice's is black and Rose's is red. Why? - B*

*Just curious. I love you. We'll pick you up at 6 for dinner - E*

*I love you too, handsome - B*

"I got 'em, Jas. Let's go get some corsages," I said with wide grin.

xx LC xx

Jasper and I got three beautiful corsages. We had to go to several different florist shops for finding ones that we liked, but I'm certain the girls will be pleased. They were currently housed in our mini-fridge. When we got back from the florist, I hopped into the shower. I wanted to shave and make myself look nice for my beautiful Bella. I went all out and even used a razor, not the usual electric shave I give myself in the morning. My face was smooth as a baby's ass. I attempted to tame my hair, but decided to fuck it. I ended up tousling in some of the pomade that I knew Bella liked. I walked out of the shower and found Emmett and Jasper in their usual spots, playing Xbox on the couch. Emmett quickly looked back and he jumped off the couch, nearly sprinting to the bathroom. I slipped on a pair of boxer briefs under my towel, before removing it. I had planned on wearing my black suit. I had a purple tie that I hoped would match Bella's dress. I pulled out a t-shirt and slipped it on. I put on my suit pants and a light purple dress shirt, tucking it in. I grabbed my tie and looped it around my neck.

After I was dressed, I sat down at my computer and began inputting the song I had jotted down earlier this morning into Finale. I put my ear buds in and listened to what it sounded like. I was pleased with what I had, but it needed to be tweaked. I spent forty-five minutes adjusting the sounds, chords and note

## La Cantante

progression as Emmett and Jasper got ready. I guess I was in the zone as Emmett thumped his hand on my head to get my attention.

"Cullen! Anybody home?" he yelled in my face.

"Jeez, Em! Could you be any louder?" I said, pulling my ear buds out of my ears.

"Actually, I can. Wanna hear?" he replied with a dimply grin.

"No. I'm good. You guys ready?" I asked as I put on my suit jacket. I put my cell phone, wallet and keys into the pockets.

"Let's dance it up, bitches," Jasper said as he wiggled his butt. He was wearing a pair of charcoal slacks and black jacket, white shirt and red and black tie. He bent down and picked up the corsages we got and handed them to us. Emmett was wearing black dress pants, red dress shirt and black tie. Emmett took out his wallet and rooted around for the money for the corsage. I waved him off. He rolled his eyes and stuffed the money into my suit pocket.

*He's as stubborn as his sister.*

I quickly put on some cologne before we walked out of the door, locking up our room. We strode down the hall and went downstairs to Bella's room. Emmett banged on the door. Alice screeched that they weren't ready yet. I heard Bella and Rose groan saying that everything was fine. We heard a bit of a scuffle and Rose opened the door. She was wearing a form-fitting red dress that was sleeveless. It fluttered away from her body. Her hair was lightly curled. She looked like a Vargas girl from the 1940s. Very classy.

"Edward, I'm seriously going to kill the sprite. Would you be pissed?" she asked.

"Nah. I'll help you hide the body," I chuckled.

## La Cantante

"Quit picking on my girlfriend," Jasper said, slipping past Rose and I to Alice. She looked up at him with wide eyes. She started bouncing on her toes and she threw her arms around him, nearly knocking Jasper over, kissing him passionately. Apparently, that was the first time that Jasper had call Alice his girlfriend. I subtly cleared my throat, effectively causing Jasper and Alice to separate with sheepish grins on their faces. I looked at my sister, who was wearing a very revealing black dress, and she looked so happy. Her usually spiky hair was curled and pinned with a couple of rhinestoned barrettes. Jasper handed her the corsage with a nervous smile. Suffice it to say, Alice pounced on him again, actually knocking him onto her bed.

I finally had the opportunity to look at my Bella. She was wearing a knee length purple dress that was strapless. Her hair was curled and pulled into a ponytail that was off to the side. Her makeup was soft and smoky looking. She looked like she was sparkling. In her ears were a pair of simple diamond studs and she wore a chunky silver necklace. I slowly walked up to her and I knew I was staring, but I could not care less.

*She's so beautiful. What have I done to deserve her?*

"You look absolutely gorgeous, Bella. This is for you," I said quietly handing her wrist corsage. It was all different shades of purple and it complemented her dress. I removed it from the plastic case and slipped it over her wrist. Her cheeks turned a delightful shade of pink.

*Just like when she comes. Get your mind out of the bedroom, Cullen!*

I leaned in and gave her a sweet kiss on her perfect mouth, brushing my lips across hers. She hummed lightly as she wrapped her arms around my torso. "Thank you, handsome."

We were pulled from our reverie by my sister. She said that we were going with Angela and Ben. Alice and Jasper would ride with them and Emmett and Rose would be riding with Bella and me.

*Bossy little sprite.*



## La Cantante

When we got to the cars, Bella got in the back seat with Rosalie. Emmett sat in front with me. We drove to a nicer American grill called New Moon. When we got there, we noticed that Mike Newton and his date, Jessica Stanley were at the restaurant. Bella invited them to join us. She said it was the least she could do after stepping on his toes during Express rehearsal. We were seated and ordered our food. It was really good. The menu was very diverse and almost everything that was ordered was tasty. Bella said she'd like to come again. I could never deny her anything. I readily agreed. After settling the bill, we headed to the banquet hall.

We walked into the banquet hall and we could hear the music pumping. There were a fair number of people there. We quickly walked into the ballroom and dropped our stuff off at a table. I pulled Bella to get our picture taken. She said no but I pulled out the puppy-dog pout and she caved. The photographer positioned us and he snapped several pictures. He gave us a ticket and we could pick our photos before the end of the night. If we didn't, they would be in the student union on the following Monday.

After we got our pictures, Alice dragged Bella, Rose and Angela on the dance floor. They started doing some line-dance thing. Bella and Rose got it easily, being familiar with basic dance moves. Alice just bounced on her toes to the beat. Angela, if it was possible, made Bella look incredibly graceful. Angela was clumsier than my beautiful girlfriend. Don't get me wrong, Bella moves very well on the dance floor and when she walks and when she's writhing underneath me...

*Stop imagining making love to your girlfriend. It would not be good to pitch a tent in the suit.*

Bella caught my eye and waved me out there. I grabbed Jasper's sleeve and nodded to the dance floor. He and Emmett came onto the dance floor with me. I slid next to Bella and joined them in the Cha Cha Slide. The last time I danced to this was at my cousin's wedding and one of the bridesmaids was trying to grab my ass as I cha cha-ed. We danced for a few more songs. I had to excuse myself to get a drink and go to the bathroom.

## La Cantante

I was walking to the bathroom when I heard the most annoying sound. Ever.

"Hi, Eddie."

*Tanya. Fuck my life.*

"Name's EDWARD, Tanya. Get it right," I seethed.

"I see that you came with your little mouse. Is she keeping you satisfied? I could always make you scream, Eddie."

"I screamed because you disgust me, Tanya. It was a mistake ever being with you. Will you please leave me alone?" I scowled.

"Oh, Eddie. I know you enjoyed it. You always came back for more. I'm willing to take you back, Eddie. I want to feel you," Tanya said as she stalked closer to me. She grabbed my tie and tried to pull me closer to her. I held firm.

"I don't want to feel you, Tanya. You make my skin crawl. Leave. Me. Alone."

"Surely, you don't mean that, Eddie," she said as she pinned me to the wall with her large breasts. She ran her hands down my sides and I wanted to puke. She looked up at me through her lashes and licked her lips. "You want me, Eddie. I can feel how uneven your breathing is."

"That's because I'm trying not to breath. You nauseate me, Tanya," I said putting my hands on her arms, trying to move her away. She slipped her arms around my waist and leaned forward, her lips puckered in a kiss.

"I DON'T FUCKING THINK SO, BITCH!" Bella screamed. "Get your grimy paws off of my boyfriend."

"Your boyfriend? Oh no, honey. He's mine," Tanya fumed. "He'll always be mine. He'll dump your mousy ass and come crawling back to me. You have nothing to offer, you whiny little bitch. You have no tits, no personality and probably haven't even fucked him. He's a great fuck. Huge cock."

## La Cantante

I saw red. No one talked about Bella that way. "Tanya. I vowed to myself that I would never call a woman this, but you are the biggest bitch I've ever met. You're cold, heartless and vindictive. Bella is worth ten million of you, if not more. I'm never leaving her. Ever. The only way I'm leaving her is if she asks me to go. Do you want me to go, Bella?"

"Never, Edward."

"I guess that clears that up. So, like Bella said, 'get your grimy paws off her boyfriend.'" I sneered.

Tanya shoved me into the wall before reeling back and smacking me in the face. She was getting ready to punch me in the side, when I grabbed her hand. "What did I say if you ever hit me again? I'd call the cops. Bella, do you have your phone handy?" I snarled.

"Yep. Do you want me to call 911 or Det. Raisor?" she asked sweetly.

"Detective?" Tanya squeaked. I nodded. She pulled her hand away and her eyes widened. She looked at Bella, who had her phone out, ready to call. She glanced back at me and ran down the opposite direction of the hallway toward the exit.

I looked at Bella and I noticed that she was trembling. I walked toward her slowly. "Baby?"

"I'm okay, Edward. Just hold me," she said defeated. I pulled her into my arms and she melted into my chest. I heard a few sniffles and I knew she was crying. I swayed back and forth with her, rubbing soothing circles on her back.

"Thank you for saving me from the evil succubus, Tanya. She's a nasty ho," I mumbled into her hair.

"What did you see in her, Edward?" she asked.

## La Cantante

I pulled away and brought us to a small bench in the hallway. "When we first met, Tanya was nice. She was funny. We got each other. We both were getting over long relationships that didn't end well and we needed a physical release. I guess 'friends with benefits' was the best way to describe our relationship. I eventually realized that I didn't want that anymore. Being with her made me sick. I just continued to call her out of habit. When I started to pull away, she got needy, mean and vindictive. She wanted more. Much more. I wanted nothing. I ended things with her on the morning that we met, though in my mind they had been over for months. I was a fool. A horny fool, thinking with my dick and not my brain. I fucked up. Fucked up, big time. I understand if you don't want to see me, though it will pain me to be away from you," I mumbled.

"Edward, I'm not going to lie. I'm very pissed. Very pissed. I knew that you had some sort of relationship with Tanya. However, I hadn't realized that you had just 'broke it off' with her the morning that we met. I'm feeling a little betrayed over being the rebound, kind of," she sneered. "However, I couldn't want to be away from you even if I tried. Just know, you got some serious sucking up to do to me, mister."

"Got it. I am truly sorry. I love you more than you can possibly imagine, Bella," I said sadly. "Please forgive me and my stupidity."

"Don't do it again or I'll serve you your balls in a plate of fettuccini alfredo if you do," Bella said, poking me very hard in the chest.

"Yes, dear."

"Did you just 'yes, dear' me?" she said. "You are so in the doghouse." Bella got up from the bench and walked back to the ballroom. I sat on the bench watching her go. I had fucked up. Fucked up huge, but Bella had rescued me from the skanky ho that was Tanya. I took a deep breath and walked back to the ballroom. I was immediately attacked by a small sprite. She smacked me everywhere she could reach.

## La Cantante

"You're a tool, Edward Anthony Masen Cullen! Do you know that?" Alice screeched as she pulled back to my hallway of shame.

"I know, Alice. Believe me, I know. Is she okay?" I asked.

"Bella, Rose and Emmett went out on the balcony to get some air. She looked pissed. You will have to buy her diamonds to get in her good graces again."

"Okay, Alice. I'll go run to Tiffany's and get a ring right now at 9:37 at night." I slumped back down onto the bench.

"Do you have your guitar on you?" Alice said, with a twinkle in her eyes.

"I have an acoustic in my trunk. Why?" Then, it hit me. I looked at my sister and sprang off of the bench. I threw my arms around her and spun her around. "You're brilliant, Pixie! Go talk to the DJ!"

I sprinted off to the car and grabbed my guitar out of my trunk. I slipped out my cell phone and turned on my pitch pipe application. I tuned my guitar in the parking lot and dashed back into the ballroom. When I slipped back inside, there was a wireless microphone in the center of the dance floor. I took off my suit coat and put my guitar strap over my body. I rechecked the tuning and it was fine. Rosalie, Emmett, Alice and Bella came in from the patio. Rosalie was shooting daggers at me and Emmett looked like he was ready to kill me. I let out a huge breath and I walked to the microphone.

"Bella, I'm sorry for hurting you. Please know that you'll always be my girl," I began nervously. I started a slow, melancholy acoustic version of "Brown Eyed Girl."

*Hey, where did we go  
Days when the rains came?  
Down in the hollow  
Playin' a new game*

## La Cantante

*Laughin' and a-runnin', hey hey  
Skippin' and a-jumpin'  
In the misty mornin' fog  
With our, our hearts a-thumpin'*

*And you, my brown eyed girl  
You my brown eyed girl*

*And whatever happened  
To Tuesday and so slow  
Going down the old mine  
With a transistor radio*

*Standin' in the sunlight laughin'  
Hidin' behind a rainbow's wall  
Slippin' and a-slidin'  
All along the waterfall*

*With you, my brown eyed girl  
You my brown eyed girl*

*Do you remember when  
We used to sing?  
Sha la la, la la, la la, la la, l-la te da  
Just like that  
Sha la la, la la, la la, la la, l-la te da  
La te da*

*So hard to find my way  
Now that I'm all on my own  
I saw you just the other day  
My, how you have grown*

*Cast my memory back there Lord  
Sometimes I'm overcome thinkin' 'bout it  
Makin' love in the green grass*

## La Cantante

*Behind the stadium  
With you, my brown eyed girl  
You my brown eyed girl*

*Do you remember when  
We used to sing?  
Sha la la, la la, la la, la la, l-la te da  
(Lyn' in the green grass!)  
Sha la la, la la, la la, la la, l-la te da  
(Bit by bit by bit by bit by bit by bit)  
Sha la la, la la, la la, la la, l-la te da  
(Sha la la la la, la la la la, la te da, la te da, la te da, da da da)  
Sha la la, la la, la la, la la, l-la te da*

"I love you, Bella. Please forgive me," I added at the end with a small smile. I could see her by our table, tears flowing down her cheeks. I walked away from the microphone, slinging my guitar on my back to where she sat. I knelt in front of her. "Don't cry, beautiful. I'm sorry. You'll always be my beautiful, brown eyed girl. My angel. *Il mio cantante*."

"I forgive you, Edward. I love you, too," she replied as she leaned forward, putting her arms around my neck. I hadn't realized that we had acquired quite an audience and getting a round of applause. I faintly heard some glasses clinking, like at a wedding, indicated that we needed to 'kiss and make up.' I pulled away and looked at her, asking permission with my eyes. She answered by grabbing my tie and pulling me to her lips.

*And all is right with the world. Bella's forgiven me.*

I pulled away from her, gently cradling her face. I stood up and Alice had brought my guitar case and suit coat to our table. I put my guitar back into the case and slipped my coat back on. The rest of the group had gone back onto the dance floor to give Bella and me some privacy. We couldn't leave because we had to give Emmett and Rosalie a ride back to campus.

*There's going to be a fun car ride home. Emmett's going to kick my ass. Shit.*

## La Cantante

I sat next my beautiful girl and held her hand in both of mine. We both stared into each other's eyes. I reached up and tucked a piece of hair behind her ear, tracing my fingers down the curve of her jaw. She smiled at me and ruffled my hair.

"That was really sweet, Edward. I'm sorry I got so upset with you," she said quietly.

"It was Alice's idea. I just tweaked it and made it my own. I'm glad you liked it," I said as I kissed her cheek, nuzzling my nose into her hair. "I do sincerely apologize for my transgressions with Tanya. I should have told earlier that we had 'broken up' that we met. I feel like such an ass."

"I have my crazy ex-boyfriend. You have your own crazy ex-kind of girlfriend/fuckbuddy. We're even," Bella said with a dismissive wave of the hand.

"Ah, no. Your situation is a little more serious than Skankya. He could really hurt you. She has more bark than bite," I said seriously.

"I guess I'm lucky I have you to protect me," she giggled as she leaned in to kiss me.

"Damn straight, woman," I said as I returned the kiss.

"You know is great about fighting?" she said as she cocked up a brow.

"Making up?" I said, quirking my own brow.

"Is it later, yet?" she said seductively.

*Hello, boner!*

I gulped, my collar of my shirt feeling very tight. I loosened my tie and undid the top button. "Is it getting hot in here, or is just me?"



## La Cantante

"Want to go outside to cool off, handsome?" Bella asked, a mischievous smirk on her beautiful features.

*She's up to something.*

"Sure, beautiful," I said getting up, linking my fingers with hers. We walked out onto the patio into the cool night air. Bella tugged on my hand, leading us away from the banquet hall. It was located near a small lake and there was a pathway leading to a tiny gazebo. Just past the gazebo was a small boathouse. I could faintly hear the sounds of the dance in the ballroom. Bella led us past the gazebo toward the far end of the boathouse.

"I think it's 'later,' Edward," she cooed.

My eyes widened and I whipped my head down to Bella. She was looking at me, her lip pulled into her teeth. Her eyes were predatory, but her body language was very timid.

*That's fucking hot. Yes. And. Please.*

I took a quick glance around us to see if we were not followed. The coast was clear. I pinned Bella against the rough wall of the boat house. I took off my suit jacket and put it around her shoulders. She looked at me with a look of confusion.

"I don't want you to get splinters, beautiful. That would not be very pleasant," I purred. I dipped my head down and gave Bella a searing kiss. I traced my tongue along her lower lip. Her hands went directly to my hair, tugging very roughly. I groaned and she slipped her tongue into my mouth. Her tongues danced with each other. I reached down and hitched Bella's leg around my hip. My hand ran up and down her leg, inching closer to her ass. She ground her hips against my body, making me harder. I finally reached the top of her leg and ran my fingers along the edge of her panties.

*Nice. She's wearing a thong.*

## La Cantante

I slipped my finger inside her damp panties and ran it along her silky, wet folds. She moaned and kissed me deeper. I pushed my finger inside of her warmth and curled my fingers. She swiveled her hips and rode my hand. I kissed down her neck, pulling aside my jacket, and sucking along her collarbones. I put in another finger and pumped harder.

"Edward, that feels so good. I need to feel you, please," she begged. Her hands went to my belt buckle and deftly undid it. She hastily unbuttoned my pants and eased the zipper down. She put her warm, tiny hand into my boxers and wrapped it around my cock. She twisted and pumped her hand along my shaft. I moaned and bucked my hips. I pulled back and looked into Bella's eyes. They were wild with desire. I removed my hand from her pussy and gave a sharp tug to her underwear, effectively tearing them from her body. She gasped.

Bella pushed down my boxers and released my cock from its cotton prison. She looked down at it as she rubbed some of the pre-cum and twisted her wrist. I heaved a breath. "I need you, Bella."

"Yes, Edward. Please."

I bent down and picked her up, wrapping her legs around my body. She lifted her skirt to adjust for the movement. I slid into her in one thrust. She screamed. I kissed her to muffle the sound. "You have to be quiet, baby. We don't want anyone interrupting us." She nodded and pressed her cheek to my shoulder. I drove into her hard and fast. Her whimpers and groans urging me on. I gently pushed her back so her back was against the wall. I angled my hips so I could go into her deeper.

"Edward, I'm going to come. Faster, baby," she moaned.

I thrust my hips at a rapid pace, my own release coming. "Oh my God, Bella. You feel amazing. I love you, baby." I looked up at her face, my green eyes piercing her chocolaty brown ones. As our gazes met, Bella let out a strangled scream and I felt her muscles clamp down on my cock. Several thrusts later and I felt my dick twitch and spill into her. My back was spasming and my legs were weak from holding us up. After a moment, I pulled out of Bella, missing

## La Cantante

her warmth. I slowly eased Bella's feet back onto the ground. She leaned against the boat house. I tucked myself back in my boxers and pulled my pants up, tucking my shirt back in. I leaned in and gave Bella a searing kiss, my hands cupping her face. I pulled away and gave her a crooked smile. She smiled back and then shivered.

Then she smacked me.

"What was that for?" I asked, rubbing my chest.

"For ripping my underwear, you perv. Now my ass is cold."

"Baby, your ass would have been cold, regardless," I said picking up her underwear. "You were wearing a thong, my love."

"Minor technicalities. Can I have my panties back, please?" she asked holding her hand out.

I pilfered them and stuck them into my pocket. "Nope."

"Edward Cullen. I would have never pegged you as a panty thief," she admonished.

"Bella Swan that was one of the hottest things I've ever experienced. I want a memento to remember it by," I said with a smirk.

"I'm not going to have any underwear if I continue dating you," she sulked.

"And this is a bad thing because...?"

"Perv."

"But I'm your perv," I said sweetly.

"Forever, baby. I love your perviness," she said with an eye roll.

## La Cantante

"I love you, too baby." I said as I kissed her temple.

*That's what I call make up sex.*

**A/N - Okay, so I needed to bring back Skankya. She had to try to get her clutches back into Edward. Typically Bella would be crying and jumping to conclusions. I wanted to make her be more bad-ass. So, I did. I also hope you liked the boathouse make up sex. That's on my bucket list.**

**Also, I do not own "Brown Eyed Girl."**

# Holy Crap and Halloween

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 30: Holy Crap and Halloween

### BPOV

*Did I just do that? Did Edward and I just fuck outside, behind a boathouse? Did he just rip my panties and pilfer them? Holy shit!*

Edward and I were walking back to the banquet hall after our little tryst. I'm still wearing his jacket and my ass is cold. He has a satisfied grin on his face. I'm mildly embarrassed. I couldn't believe that we just did that.

We got back to the banquet hall and our little group was dancing in the middle of the dance floor. Edward squeezed my hand and I gave him a small smile, it didn't quite reach my eyes. He face fell when he saw my worried expression.

"What's wrong, beautiful?" he asked, gently caressing my cheek

"I'm sorry I jumped you, Edward. I am so embarrassed," I mumbled.

"Sweetheart, you don't hear me complaining. That was fucking hot," he replied with a suggestive wiggle of the eyebrows.

"Don't expect regularly, Cullen. You're just irresistible," I giggled.

"Damn straight, woman. Let's dance," Edward said as he wiggled his butt.

"Cute, Edward. You missed your calling as a male stripper. I can so see you in

## La Cantante

a banana hammock," I laughed as I dropped his jacket by our table.

Edward stopped where he was and his jaw dropped. His face then contorted into the most adorable grimace. "Ew, Bella. Those guys are nasty and gross. I don't even want to know."

"Face it, Edward. You're absolutely gorgeous. You have a great body. You can dance and dance WELL. You should have been a male stripper. However, I'm not sure if I would like all those random women ogling you. You're mine," I said possessively.

"I'll be your male stripper any day, baby. I'm too sexy for this shirt, too sexy for this shirt, so sexy it hurts," he sang as he gyrated his hips.

"That's hot, Edward."

"I know. I fucking rock," he said smugly, pulling me onto the dance floor. He continued shaking his ass as we walked on to the dance floor. He then turned to face me, walking backwards, shaking his shoulders. I laughed at his antics. Edward can be so serious at times, but he really did have a goofy side.

We all danced as a group for the rest of the evening. Alice was in hysterics when Edward and Jasper reenacted the entire song "Save a Horse, Ride a Cowboy." Jasper was definitely not Express material. He could sing like an angel, play bass like a mad man, but couldn't dance for shit. He did some random thrust, shake, twist thing that was not attractive. Alice watched him and shook her head in embarrassment.

Alice and Edward did the jitterbug to some Brian Setzer song. She was so tiny; Edward easily lifted her for the throws and jumps. Edward tried to get me to do that with him, but I reminded him of my "situation" and his eyes widened. Edward's cheeks turned pink and he patted his pocket.

*Yes, Cullen. You have my underwear in your pocket. My ripped panties. I'm currently going commando. I don't want the entire school to see my girlie bits. My NAKED, BARE girlie bits.*

## La Cantante

Things began to slow down. Edward pulled me into his arms and we were happily ensconced in our little love bubble. I laid my head on his chest and took a deep breath. I reveled in the clean, musky scent that was purely Edward. I felt him nuzzle my hair and take a deep breath of his own. He hummed happily as we moved around the dance floor. I closed my eyes and held tightly onto my love. I was still not happy about the situation with Tanya, but he was mine. He never wanted to be with her. It only was a relationship of convenience. However, he loved me. He loved only me. I loved only him.

I opened my eyes and looked around the room. I saw Jasper and Alice dancing with each other, making googly eyes at one and another. I then saw Rose and Emmett slow dancing. They were pretty separated, but Rose let Emmett touch her. His hand was around her waist and his other hand was holding her hand to his chest. The only guy that I had seen touch Rose was Edward and that was during Express rehearsal. That was a quick hand hold, a turn, maybe a fast dip. For Rose to have Emmett touch her like this was huge. I caught her eyes and gave her a huge smile. She returned it with a nervous smirk. I gave her an encouraging thumbs up. Edward, who had his head resting on mine, picked it up and turned his head toward Rose and Emmett's direction. He gave her a warm smile as well.

The dance wound down. Everyone was sufficiently danced out. We all headed out to the cars. Emmett and Rose were holding hands as we walked to Edward's car. We quickly got in. I sat in the front with Edward while Rose and Emmett were in the back. We sped back to Emerson. Jasper and Alice headed up to Jasper's room. Edward and Emmett hung out with Rose and me. When we got into the room, I slipped into the bathroom to change and put on some underwear. I popped in a DVD and the four of us watched it in silence. After the movie, Emmett decided to go upstairs. Edward warned Emmett to knock first. He rolled his eyes and disappeared out the door. No less than two minutes later, Emmett returned with a look of pure disgust on his face.

"I never knew the hick was so...so...flexible," he said with a shudder. "And Alice..."

"Don't, Em. She's my sister and I do NOT want to know," Edward threatened.

## La Cantante

Rose offered her bed to Emmett and went to sleep in Alice's. I gave Emmett a pair of basketball shorts that I pilfered from him. He slept in the shorts and his t-shirt under his dress shirt. Edward and I snuggled on my bed. He wore his boxers and undershirt, being mindful of the extra people in the room. Sleep came quickly as the exhaustion of the past few days hit me.

xx LC xx

The weather was getting colder. The leaves on the trees were turning colors and beginning to fall off. Midterms were approaching. It was my body's cue to get very sick.

The week following Homecoming was good. Edward was being overly doting, undoubtedly still trying to suck up to me after his fuck-up with Tanya. I could feel myself getting tired and run down. I usually got pretty sick during school sometime in October. Like clockwork, I woke up on a Tuesday morning feeling tired. By the end of the day, I was home in my bed, running a fever and had the chills.

Edward was frantic while I was sick. I got up for Aural Harmony like usual and went to class. Edward brought me my usual cup of coffee but I couldn't drink it. My throat felt like it was on fire. I had him drink it and I went to The Cage before class to get some hot tea. As class continued, I felt worse and worse. My head was pounding, my body aching and my throat had a burn in it. The tea, which usually soothes the throat, actually hurt as it went down. Edward felt my forehead during class and his brow furrowed.

"You're burning up, Bella. You need to back to bed," he admonished.

"I'm fine, Edward. I have my voice lesson and then I'll go back to Patterson," I croaked, my voice sounding like that of a heavy smoker.

"Yeah and you'll get so much done with your voice sounding like you smoke a pack a day. I'm pretty certain your voice teacher will understand if you can't make it to your lesson," he chided.



## La Cantante

I relented. I was feeling too shitty to put up a fight. I quickly wrote my voice teacher a note, asking Edward to drop it off to her before he went to his biochemistry lab. I barely got through the rest of Aural Harmony. Edward said that he would take notes during U.S. History for me and make copies. I nodded weakly and dragged my sick ass back to Patterson.

I quickly stripped off my clothes and put on my favorite flannel pajama bottoms and oversized hoodie. I took out my contact lenses and rolled my body back into bed. As soon as my head hit the pillow, I was asleep.

When I woke up, it was dark out. I heard some clicking sounds. I reached and found my glasses and slipped them onto my face. Edward was typing on his laptop on my desk. His beautiful face was swathed in the cool glow of his computer screen. Most of the lights were off except for a small desk lamp on Rose's desk. His brow was furrowed as he typed away. He had a pencil stuck behind his ear and a book open to his left. I went to sit up and my whole body refused to move. I was so achy. I felt like I went ten rounds with a heavy weight boxer. I slumped back into the bed with a low groan.

"Bella?" Edward asked. "Are you okay, baby?"

"No. I feel like total crap," I groaned, my voice barely above a whisper.

"What are your symptoms?" he asked as he came to my bedside. He sat down on the edge and he felt my forehead. His hands felt so cool against my heated skin. He grimaced as he felt my face. He went back to my desk and got the thermometer that I kept in my top left drawer. He turned it on and held it out for me. I rolled my eyes and put the thermometer in my mouth. It beeped a few moments later. "102.9! Bella, you're fever is too high. Symptoms, beautiful. I want to get you some meds. Perhaps my father can write you a prescription if it's strep."

I went to open my mouth and my hand went to my throat. Edward hopped up and got a pad and a pencil. I quickly jotted down my symptoms. He read them and pulled out his phone. "Hi, Dad. Bella's sick."

I heard Carlisle's muffled reply and Edward nodded at what he said. He then read off my list of symptoms, along with my temperature. Edward took a hesitant glance at me. He picked up his lanyard with his keys on it. He clicked on the flashlight that he kept on there. "Bella, can you open your mouth and say 'ahh?'" he said with a skeptical look on his face. I quirked an eyebrow and reluctantly did so. He described what he saw, with clinical terms that one would hear in a doctor's office. He then cradled his phone between his shoulder and chin and lightly felt on my neck. He pulled his hands away and untucked his phone from his shoulder. He gently cupped my face and brushed my messy hair from my forehead. He and Carlisle spoke for a few minutes. Edward dashed to the computer and rattled off a phone number. "Bella, are you allergic to penicillin?" I shook my head no. "Okay, thanks Dad. I'll call you is she doesn't improve. I will. Bye."

Edward turned and faced me with a sad expression on his face. I mouthed 'what?'

"Based on your symptoms, the state of your throat and fever, my dad thinks you have strep throat. He's calling in a prescription for a Z-pack at Target. I'm going to pick it up for you along with other provisions. He said for you to go to the campus health center tomorrow before you take the prescription, though. A rapid strep test should do that for you. I can take you to the hospital if you want it done sooner, though. I hate seeing you sick, beautiful," he said miserably.

I started to scramble out of bed because Edward needed my insurance information. I was barely standing when the room began to spin. The next thing I knew, I was in Edward's arms, his handsome face etched in worry. "Bella! Are you okay?"

I blinked a few times and I managed to focus my eyes onto his. I nodded weakly and he scooped me up and put me back into bed. I whispered "Insurance card. Hand me my purse."

He tucked me back into bed and grabbed my purse. I opened it up and pulled out my wallet. I took out my driver's license, insurance card and debit card. I handed the three cards to him. He pushed my debit card back into my hands

## La Cantante

and put the other two in his wallet. "I'll be back in about an hour, beautiful. I love you. Get some more sleep," he said as he kissed my forehead. He rested his cheek and against mine. He went back into my top left drawer in my desk and pulled out some ibuprofen. He also got a water bottle from my fridge. He handed me three pills and the water. I quickly downed them, grimacing as they went down my throat. "Text me if you need anything. Be back in a bit," Edward said with a smile and he dashed out the door. I settled back into bed and fell into a fitful sleep. I woke up a short time later and Edward had returned.

He had a bag from Panera Bread, a Target bag and bouquet of flowers. I sat up slowly and Edward hunched down on the corner of my small bed. He pulled out a small cup of soup and some hot tea. He handed me the soup and put the tea on my desk. "I wasn't sure what you liked, soup-wise. I went with the old favorite, chicken noodle. I also picked up some cough syrup, cold medicine, expectorant, cough drops and a variety pack of tea bags. Also, a small white board. I'm assuming it hurts too much to talk, so use this," he said holding up the board. I put the soup on my desk and reached for the board. I quickly ripped off the plastic covering and he handed me a marker.

*Thank you, Edward. I appreciate you taking care of me, handsome,* I wrote on the board.

"Baby, I'll do everything in my power to protect you. I'll protect you from crazy ex-boyfriends to a bout with strep throat. I love you. Eat your soup. You probably haven't eaten anything all day," he said with a crooked grin. I shook my head no and took a tentative sip of the soup. It was good. The warmth felt good on my sore throat. Edward went back to the Panera bag and pulled out a cup of soup for himself. He also got some chicken noodle soup. He also tucked into a small Greek salad. After we ate our dinner, Edward took out some cold and flu medicine and handed it to me. He also handed me a water bottle. "Take these. They'll help you sleep more comfortably."

*Thank you, Dr. Cullen. You should have stuck with medicine. You're good at this whole bedside manner thing.*

## La Cantante

"Ah, no. I have some minor issues with blood. I actually passed out in biology class when we did blood typing my senior year of high school. I think I've found my path with music education. We can teach the future of the world," he said as he held his hand to his heart.

*Oh, please.*

"I know, it's cheesy," he laughed.

*I love your brand of cheese, Edward.*

"I'm thinking I'm in a Sargento type of mood today," he snorted.

*Dork. You are a dork.*

"But I'm your dork," he said as he rubbed my cheek. His hand stayed on my face, I'm assuming to check my temperature. He grabbed the thermometer again and handed it to me. I rolled my eyes and stuck it under my tongue. It beeped and he pulled it out, "101.9. It's going down. That's good. However, it could be because of the ibuprofen I gave you earlier. Do you still feel achy?"

I nodded and then yawned. Edward took the soup cup from my legs and gently pushed me back onto the bed. He left a bottle of Gatorade and a bottle of water on the desk. I picked up my board.

*Can you stay until I fall asleep, handsome?*

"Of course, beautiful. I'll stay as long as you want. I like watching you sleep. It's fascinating. Even more so when you're delirious," he chuckled.

*Oh good lord. What did I say?*

"You were moaning a lot. I'm assuming they were good dreams because they were moans that I happen to enjoy thoroughly," he said with a twinkle in his eyes.

## La Cantante

*As soon as I'm healthy, you'll be hearing more of those moans.*

"Oh, yeah, baby. Go to sleep. You are spending tomorrow in bed. AFTER you go to the health center. Got it?" I nodded. "Good. I love you, Bella."

*I love you too, Edward.*

My eyes drifted shut and I managed to fall asleep. I vaguely remember Edward kissing me on the forehead before he left. "I love you so much, beautiful," he whispered against my hair. I hummed happily and fell into a deep sleep.

xx LC xx

So, I had strep throat. I had one of the worst cases of strep throat the nurse in the health center had ever seen. She began to write my script but I held up my Z-pack and she nodded. She told me to start it as soon as possible. I had to stay in bed the rest of the day today and take it easy the rest of the week. I managed to lay low until Friday. I had to go to class on Friday. I also had to go to see Garrett.

It was my last day working with him. The groups that I worked with were planning a going-away party for me and I wanted to be there for that. Edward insisted that he come with me. He was afraid that I would get light-headed and crash the car. I teased him that he was more worried about his Soccer Mobile than me. He choked out the pop that he drinking and spit it across the room. He gave such a glare. We left after my psychology class, which as hour later earlier than I usually leave. We got to the high school and Edward shamelessly flirted with Mrs. Cope again. We met up with Garrett at the tail end of his plan period. He said that he was going to miss me. I replied, using my board.

*I'm going to miss working with you too, Garrett. Thank you for the invaluable information you've given me.*

Garrett quirked an eyebrow. Edward explained that I was getting over being sick and was on vocal rest. Edward also informed Garrett in his change in majors. Garrett was thoroughly excited. He invited Edward to do his

## La Cantante

observation hours with him as well. Edward agreed instantly.

Each of the classes that I had worked with had planned some sort of celebration for my last day. The treble choir all baked cookies and begged me to come and hear them sing at their Collage Concert. I said I'd try, but it was finals week that week for us. The mixed choir all chipped in and bought me a fancy folder to hold my music in. It had my name embossed on the front "Isabella Swan, Choral Conductor." The concert choir had made a CDs of all of their favorite choral songs and gave them to me. I had forty-five CDs of repertoire that they liked and would recommend a choir to sing. The choir president, who was in the concert choir, typed up the list of songs that they gave me. I was truly touched by their generosity and kindness. I felt my eyes tear with each period that passed. After concert choir, I was exhausted. Edward and I both gave Garrett a hug. Garrett said he'd write me a letter of recommendation and send it to Edward's home for when I looked for a job in the future. I smiled and thanked him.

Edward and I headed back to Emerson. I fell asleep along the way. I hazily remembered pulling into Patterson, Edward picking me up and carrying me to my room. He laid me in my bed and crawled over me. He wrapped his arms around me and we both fell asleep, cuddled up with each other.

Over the weekend, it was Edward's turn to get sick. He had ran himself ragged. Thankfully, he didn't have strep throat. He just had a bad cold. I was still feeling like crap, but better than before. I spent the entire weekend taking care of my poor, pitiful boyfriend. He made the worst patient. He was grouchy, cranky and bitchy. I just slept when I was sick.

The one positive about Edward's illness was the effect on his voice. His voice, which was usually smooth and velvety, had turned raspier and dropped an octave. He sounded insanely sexy. He rolled his eyes when I mentioned it to him saying I was still delirious. He was still 'super-bass-sexy-voice man' when Monday rolled around and he couldn't sing during University Singers. I was told not to sing for at least a week. I could possibly get back into things by this coming Friday. So, Edward and I both just sat in rehearsals, taking notes, not being able to actively participate. He hated it and quite frankly, so did I.

## La Cantante

On Thursday, during Express rehearsal, Felix had given us the information about our upcoming overnight trip. We were going to a competition in Toronto.

*Thank goodness I have my passport for when Renee married Phil in Mexico.*

We had learned about half of our show and we needed to try it out. Felix informed us that we would be leaving on Thursday and coming back late on Sunday. We were driving up to Toronto, which was about a six and half hour drive. Felix pushed us extra hard that night because we had three more rehearsals before our trip. Even though Edward and I couldn't sing, we still danced. We both fell asleep in my room that night, exhausted from rehearsal.

xx LC xx

This weekend all of us were going to a Halloween party at The Chapel. It was a costume party. Earlier in the week, Alice, Rose and I went to get costumes. We were all going to paired with our 'guys' and our costumes coordinated.

Since the dance, Rose and Emmett had grown closer. They had gone out on a few dates, but they haven't done much besides hugging. Emmett was being extraordinarily patient with her. I went out one day with Emmett to run some errands and he said that he felt that Rose was the 'one.' This coming from Emmett, the eternal child, floored me. I told him to treat her right and not fuck with her. I smacked on the head for good measure. He said that he would never hurt his Rosie.

Back to the costumes, Alice found this local theater/costume shop. She and Jasper were going as a cowboy and saloon girl. Rose and Emmett were going as a football player and cheerleader. Edward and I were going as Romeo and Juliet, my two favorite fictional characters. Originally he wanted to go as teacher and student, but I put the kibosh on that. He tried to pull the pitiful puppy dog pout but I abjectly refused.

*I just want to see Edward in tights. He's got damn fine legs.*

## La Cantante

Originally, Breaking Midnight was asked to play at the party at The Chapel, but Edward's and my illness had caused us to back out. I was still weak, vocally and didn't want to chance causing any damage and Edward couldn't hit the notes needed for the songs we usually sing, though his voice was almost back to normal.

The day of the Halloween party, Alice turned into psycho-pixie. She was barking orders to me, Rose and the guys about our costumes. Jasper got sick of it and pulled her into a passionate embrace. He whispered something into her ear and her eyes got as big as saucers. Her mouth opened and stayed open as Jasper continued whispering. She nodded a few times, wrapping her arms around his waist. He gave her one more kiss and pulled away.

Edward watched the whole interaction with his jaw scraping the ground.

"What did you do to my sister? She's like quiet," he squeaked.

"Sex is a powerful persuasive tool, Cullen," Jasper replied smugly.

Edward shuddered at what Jasper said. The rest of us laughed. Alice remained calm for the rest of the day. She even let Rose and I get dressed on our own.

*I think Hell just froze over.*

After the party, Jasper informed Edward that he was taking Alice to the same bed and breakfast that we went to after my first concert as a member of Breaking Midnight. Emmett graciously offered to hang out in Ben Cheney's room so Edward and I could get some time alone. It had been awhile since we had some quality time. Nearly two weeks since that fateful weekend. Unfortunately, illness, midterms and life got in the way of our sex lives. Edward was also leery about making love while I was on antibiotics. He said that he loved me and wanted to have children with me, but not now. I managed to get a visit from Aunt Flo while I had strep.

*Kick me while I'm down, why don't you?*



## La Cantante

We all got dressed for the party. Jasper was wearing a pair of blue jeans, with a pair of chaps over the top, complete with cowboy boots. He also had on the ugliest plaid shirt and leather fringed vest. On his dirty blonde locks was an authentic ten gallon hat. The sad thing, he owned all of it. He really was a hick. Alice was wearing a pink and black saloon girl's outfit. She had a bright pink feather sticking out of her head and a pink feather boa. She was wearing a pair of black tights with black laced up ankle boots. Emmett was wearing an Emerson football uniform. It was actually his old uniform from when he played. Rose managed to borrow an Emerson cheerleading outfit from one of the girls on the floor. Her blonde hair was piled on her head in a high ponytail.

Edward's costume was quite elegant. He had on a cream 'poofy' blouse with a black vest that went over the top. He also wore a pair of black leggings and black boots. Over his shoulders, he had on a maroon cape. He even wore a sword. My dress was cream. It had an empire waist that pushed my breasts up and created a very nice cleavage. This was good since I really didn't have much in the chest area. The skirt of the dress was same color and was chiffon. It was a knee-length dress. Alice and I wanted a modern representation of Juliet's dress. The dress was piped with silver and gold thread. On my head, I had a small headband with the same piping as my dress.

Before we headed up to the party, we asked Angela to take our pictures. Angela couldn't go to the party because she had to be on duty. She was pissed. She took our photos, begrudgingly, wishing she could come with us.

We all piled into Edward's car. It had gotten pretty cold and you could almost feel the snow about to fall.

Emmett was in the front seat. Jasper, Rose, Alice and I were in the back seat. Jasper held Alice on his lap. It was a short drive, so there were no worries. We got to the party and headed into The Chapel. Rose and Emmett went off to go get some alcohol. Alice dragged Jasper onto the dance floor. Edward and I went to go to sit on one of the couches.

Rose and Emmett returned with four cups of beer. Emmett handed Edward a cup and Rose gave me one. I was never much a drinker, but I figured I would

## La Cantante

let loose a little bit tonight. Edward took a long pull of his drink and put it on the table in front of us. He put his arm around my shoulders and held me close. I held my beer in my lap, sipping it. Rose and Emmett took a seat in a large chair opposite of us. They appeared to be getting pretty cozy.

"So, Rose, how do you like being at Emerson? Is it better than Northwestern?" Edward asked.

"I'm really enjoying it. My classes are a lot of fun and I'm really enjoying spending time with you guys. All of you. Also, thanks for mentioning me to be in Express. That is a lot of fun," Rose said with a smile.

"You can thank Bella for that. She mentioned you to Tia," Edward replied, rubbing his hand up and down my arm.

"Speaking of Express, we need to get together for our featured dance thing," Rose said with an eye roll. "When are you available?"

"I'm free after University Singers on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Tuesdays and Thursdays are a bit more booked," he said.

"Hmmm, how about we meet on Monday after lunch in one of the small fitness studios in the athletic building. We can use the mirrors. Bella, you come too. If I'm ever unable to do the dance solo, you could step in," Rose said, clapping her hands.

"Are you sure, Rose? You've seen me move," I said with a grimace.

"Fucking-a, Bella. You are an awesome dancer. Walking is your issue," Rose snorted.

Edward stifled a laugh. I punched him in the arm. "You better behave yourself, Cullen. I'll ram my heels into your toes when we perform," I admonished.

"Bella, you are a beautiful dancer. I'm surprised that you can do intricate choreography with ease but cannot walk a flat surface," Edward snickered.

## La Cantante

"I blame Renee. She's just as much of a klutz as I am, if not more," I said, flopping back into the couch, crossing my arms over my body.

"I'm sorry, Bella. We don't mean to tease you. Really," Rose said with a sympathetic look on her face.

"Sorry, baby. I love you very much. Clumsiness and all. You're perfect in my eyes," Edward said as he kissed my temple. I rolled my eyes and took a huge pull from my drink.

*I'm feeling quite buzzed. It's only one drink...jeez. I'm such a lightweight.*

"So, back to this duet-thing. What can I expect?" Edward asked Rosalie. She went into a detailed description of their solo. It sounded extremely complex. Edward's eyes grew large as she continued. When she finished, she looked at Edward with a huge smile on her face.

"How does that sound, Edward?" Rose grinned.

"Ummm, good?" Edward squeaked out.

"Don't sound so excited, Edward. Christ," Rose huffed.

"Rosalie, you realize that I am not a trained dancer. I'm a guy who happens to have a sense of rhythm and body movement. I am apprehensive about half of the stuff you mention because I have no idea what it is," he said, rationally.

"Don't worry, Edward. I'll teach you. It's all in the hips," she giggled.

"Oh, good lord," he blushed.

I leaned in and whispered, "Banana hammock, Edward. It's calling your name."

"Fuck me. I'm so screwed," he said as he buried his head in his hands.

"That's later, baby," I said with a wave of the hand.

*Did I just say that out loud?*

"Yes, you did just say that out loud," Edward said with a chuckle. He leaned in and brushed his lips along my ear, "You'll be screaming my name later tonight, beautiful." He pulled my earlobe into his teeth and nibbled. "I love you, Bella."

"I love you, Edward," I breathed as I leaned back into his chest. I finished off my drink and went to go get another one. I motioned for anyone else. Edward nodded, as did Emmett. Rose decided not to have any more beer. It tasted like 'toilet water.'

I walked through the crowd of people, to the keg. I waited in line to get some more beer. I was spacing out when I felt a light tap on my shoulder. Confused, I turned to see who was tapping me. I nearly passed out when I saw who it was. I saw a tall body, russet skin, black hair and huge toothy grin.

*Jake? Fuck.*

"Hey, Bella!"

I blinked a few times.

*That's not Jake's voice. It's too high.*

My eyes focused on the person standing in front of me. It was Seth Clearwater, Leah's younger brother.

"Hi, Seth! What are you doing here?" I asked.

"My roommates have friends who go here to Emerson and said that they were having a party that was to end all parties. So far, it's been good. How are you doing, Bells?"

"I'm good. I'm actually really good," I replied as I filled up the glasses with some beer. "I'm here with my brother, roommates and my boyfriend, Edward."

## La Cantante

"Boyfriend? Wow! You move fast, Bells. You just moved in two months ago and now you're dating some guy?" Seth said with a glint in his eyes.

*He's hiding something.*

"Well, we've been together for about the same amount of time. We started dating at the beginning of the semester. He's my roommate's brother. Do you want to meet him?" I asked, desperately wanting to get back to Edward.

"Sure, sure. Let me grab one of those," Seth said with a tight smile.

I handed him one of the beers and we walked back to the couch where Emmett, Rose, and Edward sitting. Emmett was talking very animatedly. Edward and Rose were in stitches. Edward was laughing so hard, he had tears running down his face. Emmett saw me approach and his face immediately went serious. I gave him a glare.

"Were you talking about me?" I fumed.

"No, of course not, Isabelly. I was talking about my *other* sister," he guffawed.

"Oh, Christ! Look who I ran into while I was getting more alcohol. Rosalie Hale, Edward Cullen this is Seth Clearwater," I said introducing Seth.

Seth put down the beer and reached his hand to Rosalie. He gave it a shake. Seth then glared at Edward. "Nice to meet you both."

*What's his deal?*

I handed Rosalie her drink and Edward grabbed the beer that Seth put down. I quickly pulled it from his hands and handed the glass I had in my hand. He gave me a curious look. I gave a quick shake of the head, squeezing his leg. I didn't want Edward drinking that beer. I didn't want to drink that beer. I would make it disappear the next time I got up.

"So, Seth, what are you doing here?" Emmett asked.

## La Cantante

"My roommates know some people here and mentioned the Halloween party. Things are pretty dull at where I go, so we decided to head on out to get our drink on," Set said with a smirk.

"Where do you go to school, Seth?" Rosalie asked.

"I go to a small school about an hour west of here. Stewartson College. I got a full ride football scholarship. My family insisted that I go. I'll be the first person in my family to go to college and possibly graduate," he explained.

"What's your major, Seth?" Edward asked, putting his arm around my waist.

"I'm a business major with a minor in photography. I'm hoping to start a photography business in my hometown. There's some beautiful scenery there," Seth said, giving me a smile. "Have you talked to Jake recently, Bella?"

"He texted me when I started school. I haven't heard from since," I said tersely. "I'd be happy not to hear from him, as far as I'm concerned."

"Bella, you shouldn't be so hard on him. He loves you. He wants to be with you, in every way," Seth said passionately.

"The feeling is not mutual, Seth. He needs to understand that. I'm extraordinarily happy with Edward," I replied, lacing my fingers through Edward's hand. I turned my body and gave him a soft kiss on the lips, punctuating my statement.

Seth bristled at my actions. "Whatever, Bella. You really hurt Jacob. He's still hurting."

"He really hurt me, Seth. Do you know what he did to me? What he was GOING to do to me?" I nearly shrieked.

"Seth, man. I think you need to back down," Emmett said calmly. "You don't know what you're talking about."

## La Cantante

"I do know what I'm talking about. You led him on, Bella. You wanted it," Seth seethed.

I felt my cheeks blush, not out of embarrassment but out of anger. I sat immediately straight up, tears gathering in my eyes. "I never wanted that. Not with Jacob. I wasn't ready."

"I bet you're ready now. I bet you fucked your scrawny little boyfriend the first opportunity you had. Jake was right. You are a slut," Seth spat.

Edward jumped off of the couch and got into Seth's face. Emmett was right behind him. Seth was a little smaller than Jacob. However, he had at least a few inches on Edward and a lot more muscle. "YOU LITTLE FUCKER! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO TALK TO BELLA LIKE THAT. I HIGHLY SUGGEST THAT YOU LEAVE OR YOU WILL BE THROWN OUT," Edward roared.

Several students took notice of Edward and Emmett threatening the tall, Native American man. Seth puffed out his chest and took a step closer to Edward, sneering in his face. Out of the woodwork, Seth's friends came up and grabbed his arms. Seth struggled against his friends, ready to rip Edward's head off. Edward and Emmett stared down Seth, feeling the same way.

"Bella, you were always too good for Jake. Such a stuck up little bitch. He's better off without you," Seth snarled.

Seth was finally pulled away and escorted out of the building. Rose had moved to sit next to me after Edward got into Seth's face. Her arms were around my shoulders. I was in shock of what had just happened. Seth, sweet Seth, had gone to the dark side. Jake had corrupted him.

Edward sat back down on the couch, pulling me into his lap. I settled into the crook of his neck and the events that just occurred hit me like a ton of bricks. I felt my tears build in my eyes. The next thing I knew, I was sobbing against Edward's muscular chest.

## La Cantante

"How could he say those things like that?" I cried. "I never did anything to Seth."

"Oh, baby. He had no right to say those horrible things to you. You are one of the kindest, most gentle, most loving people I have ever known. You are a saint, Bella. Seth is a fucking tool. You have to know that are the most important person in my life. I love you. Only you," he said as he ran his hands down my cheeks.

"Bella, Seth obviously has his allegiance with Jacob. He's not worth your tears. He's not worth the time," Emmett said.

"Seth Clearwater is the scum of the earth. Jacob, whatever his last name is, is BELOW the scum of the earth. You are worth so much more than them. We love you, sweetie," Rose said as she ran her fingers through my hair.

I sniffled and gave them a small smile. "Thanks, guys. I'm sorry that it turned into drama-fest. Let's try to enjoy the rest of the party."

"Hells, yeah, Isabelly! That's my girl," Emmett boomed, pulling me from Edward's lap. The next thing I knew, I was being spun around in Emmett's arms.

"Let's get some more alcohol. Something more potent. The beer is not cutting it tonight," I said as Emmett put me on my feet. Emmett held up one finger and dashed off. Alice and Jasper came sauntering up, looking thoroughly satisfied. I raised my eyebrows at my pixie roommate. She had a sexy smirk on her face and her tights were gone. "Do we even want to know?"

"Nope. What happens in The Chapel stays in The Chapel," Jasper said as he wrapped his arms around Alice's waist, kissing her neck. "Edward, I just want to say, I love your sister."

Edward looked at Jasper and then flitted his eyes to Alice. She gave him a radiant smile and kissed Jasper on the cheek. "I love you, too Jas," Alice replied sweetly. She wiggled in his arms suggestively.



"Treat her right, Jasper. I will kick your ass if you hurt her," Edward said, a smile playing on his lips. He pulled me to him and pressed a kiss to my cheek, lightly nibbling to my ear.

Emmett returned from wherever he went with three cans of Red Bull, six cups and six shots of some brown liquid. "Jaeger Bombs, baby. These'll loosen everybody up!" He opened up the Red Bull and poured it into the cups, handing each of us one. He then handed us a shot of Jaeger. "Drop them into the Red Bull and chug. It tastes like Dr. Pepper."

We all dropped our shot into the glass and downed the sweet liquid.

*Holy Crow! That's strong!*

I felt my cheeks heat up as the alcohol went down my throat. I shook my head and grabbed Edward's hand. I pulled him onto the dance floor. I could definitely feel my inhibitions go away. I felt relaxed and happy. Edward pulled me into a tight hold and we moved on the dance floor.

The music was loud and lively. It had a really good beat to dance to. Rihanna's "Please Don't Stop the Music" came on and I turned my body away from Edward. I gave him a seductive look over my shoulder and pulled his arms around my waist. I swiveled my hips to the music, against his cock. I could feel it get harder against my ass. He moved his hips with mine. He pushed my hair over my shoulder and he nuzzled my neck, still his body with mine. He placed soft, open-mouthed kisses along the column of my neck down to my collarbones. One of his hands was splayed on my belly and his other hand held my hair out of the way. He abruptly turned me to face him. My legs were on either side of his strong thigh. He held me flush against his lean, muscular body, moving his body with the music. I raised my hands and gently tugged on his unruly hair, gazing up into his nearly black orbs. He licked his lips and his hand traveled down my torso, grazing the outside of my breasts. I heaved a breath at his elicit touch.

He ducked his head and brushed his soft, pouty lips against mine. He gave me four sweet kisses before he deepened our kiss. His silky tongue sought entrance

## La Cantante

to my mouth. I readily gave it to him. It thrust into my mouth, dancing with mine. His hands moved down and gently cupped my ass, holding my hips to his erection. I pulled away from his kiss and gave him a smirk.

"Do you have any idea what you do to me, Bella? You will unman me with your words, your body and your mind," Edward breathed raggedly into my hair. "You can't go anywhere right now. You're blocking the party from seeing the vestiges party in my tights."

"I block the view to your cock, Edward. As long as you don't cock block me later tonight," I purred, grinding my body against his.

"Not helping beautiful. I'm trying to calm down and your little booty shakes are not doing the trick," he said with a strained voice. "Trust me when I say, there will be no cock-blockage tonight. You will be mine tonight. I intend to make you feel so good."

"I'm certain of it handsome. How's the party?" I said, looking down at Edward's crotch.

"Manageable, definitely not noticeable. I think I can move now," he said with a lopsided grin. We headed back to the couch. Alice and Jasper were heavily making out on the couch. Rose and Emmett were quite comfortable on their chair. Emmett got up and got some more Jaeger bombs. We all had another one, except for Edward. He wanted to make sure that he could drive our drunk asses home.

We all stayed at the party until the band played. We only stayed through a few songs. They were really not that good. Everybody said that we should have played and the party would have been a million times better. We all piled into Edward's car. He drove us back to Patterson. Jasper and Alice, still attached at the face, were heading to the bed and breakfast. Alice took out her keys and handed them Jasper and they got into the car and drove off. Emmett and Rosalie said that they were going to hang out in my room. Edward and I went upstairs to his.

## La Cantante

It was well after eleven by the time we got to Edward's room. He unlocked the door and ushered me inside. He turned on a small lamp by the door. He went to his computer and got some music floating through the room. It had a slow, sensual feel to it. He turned and looked back at me. His eyes were black as pitch, burning with unadulterated desire. I'm certain I mirrored his look. He walked over to me and entwined our fingers. We walked over to his bed.

He bent down and gave me a sweet kiss, gently cupping my face with his strong hands. "I love you so much, Bella. You are my world, my reason for breathing. My reason for living," he said reverently.

"Edward, I love you so much, my hurt is bursting with what I feel for you. You complete me. I feel empty, a shell, when I'm away from you. I feel like I'm home with you," I said fervently. "I can never imagine not being with you."

"Oh, Bella," he sighed into my mouth as he kissed me deeply. His hands fisted into my long hair. He gently pulled on my tresses, pulling my head to one side. He ran his nose along the curve my jaw and down my neck, pressing open-mouthed kisses as he went. I reached up and released the clasp of his maroon cape from his costume and it fell noiselessly on the floor. His hands traveled through my hair to the zipper of my dress. He slowly pulled the zipper down. I shrugged out of the dress and it pooled at my feet. I stood in front of my love wearing a cream, demi bra with a pair of matching cream boy shorts. I moved my hands to the buttons of his vest, undoing it and pushing it off his shoulders. He reached behind his head and took off his shirt.

"Lay down, beautiful. I have to address these horrendous shoes," he said with a smirk.

He bent down and removed his shoes. They were insanely complex. They were a pair of knee high black boots that laced up. He got them off and slipped off his pants as well.

*Gah! Edward went commando!*

My brows shot up to my hairline as I looked at him. "No underwear, Edward?"

## La Cantante

"Alice would have had my head. She didn't want me to have VPL," he chuckled as he laid down on top of me. "She suggested briefs and I would rather eat a pound of glass before wearing tighty-whities. Do you like it, beautiful?" he asked as he wiggled his hips.

"Oh, yes, Edward. You have a beautiful body. You are perfect," I breathed as my hands snaked down his strong back, lightly scratching before ending on his firm, delicious ass.

"I'm not perfect, Bella. That would be you, beautiful. Your skin is so lovely. Your hair is thick and smells so good. I could get lost in your brown eyes. I could live off of your scent and your kisses. However, it's what's here that makes you perfect," he said as he laid his hand on my heart. "This is so beautiful. So selfless, kind, warm, loving, intelligent, talented and mine."

"I'll always be yours, Edward." I reached up and pulled his face to mine. I kissed him with all the love I could. I wanted him to know that he was mine, my soul mate. He rolled us and I was straddling his waist, never breaking our kiss. I lightly scratched my nails down his chest, through the sparse amount of chest hair that was sprinkled there. His hands moved to my ass and held me over his huge erection. I pulled my hands from his chest and leaned back. I reached behind my back and unclasped my bra. I slowly and sensually removed the straps from my body. I crossed my hands over my body, holding the cups of the bra against my body. I gradually removed the garment from my body, tossing it on the floor. Edward's hands traced over the curve my belly, circling my navel and moved up to my breasts. He lightly squeezed my mounds in his large hands. I covered his hands with mine, arching my back.

"So perfect, love."

"Only for you, Edward. Only you," I whispered. I leaned down and nibbled along the shell of his ear. He groaned and bucked underneath me. I continued my kissing and nibbling down his long neck. His hands had moved from my breasts and moved back to my ass. He moved my body up and down his rigid cock. He rolled us on to our sides, hitching my leg over his hip. His dick pressed into my fabric covered core. I continued moving my body, creating the

friction that I so desperately wanted.

He removed my leg from his body and moved his hands to the edge of my panties. His fingers danced along the edge of the lacy fabric. I whimpered at his teasing. He smiled against my skin, pushing me on my back. He gently pulled down my panties. I lifted my hips and he eased them down my legs. He ghosted his fingers up my legs, tracing erotic patterns on my skin. "Your skin is so soft, Bella," he cooed. "I love touching you."

His fingers traveled further up my legs, moving on my inner thighs.

*So close and yet so far.*

He removed his hand from my legs and lightly scratched my sides, belly and arms. I whimpered. My hips were shifting on the bed, my thighs rubbing together. "Anxious, are we?" he smirked.

"Yes, Edward. I need to feel you," I begged.

His hand returned to the lower part of my abdomen. He gazed into my eyes as his fingers moved lower, closer to my wet, warm core. "Do you want me to touch you, Isabella?"

"Please, Edward," I said as I pulled his face closer to mine. He kissed my nose, my cheeks and forehead before giving me a deep kiss. As he kissed me, his fingers finally moved to the promised land. He gently swirled his fingertips over my clit. My hips bucked at his touch. I moaned into his mouth and tugged on his hair. He applied more pressure to nub. My body was responding involuntarily. He slipped a long finger into my core, curling his finger. His thumb continued playing with my clit. "Feels so good, Edward."

"I know what would feel even better, beautiful," he said as he smirked at me. He took his tongue and traced it along the column of my neck, down between my breasts, and circling my navel. He shifted his body so he was in between my legs. With a flick of the tongue, he laved my clit. "You taste so good, Bella. So sweet. So perfect." He added a second finger into my slick folds. He pulled

my clit into his teeth and lightly nibbled. I arched off of the bed, my hand reaching for Edward's soft, silky hair. He pumped his hand, curling his fingers in my body as he continued feasting off of me. My breathing was becoming more and more ragged.

"Edward, don't stop. Please. It...Oh, God!" I breathed. My body was ready to combust. I could feel myself losing control, coming to the edge of the cliff. He added a third finger and bit down on my clit. I fell off the edge and screamed.

Edward kept kissing me as I returned back to earth. He languidly moved up my body, pressing kisses and nibbles as he went. He removed his fingers from my core and he pulled them into his mouth. I watched him as he sucked his fingers. I reached for his face and pulled to mine, plunging my tongue into his mouth. He pulled away, gazing into my eyes.

"I love you, Bella. I need to feel you," he rasped. He settled his body in between my legs. I could feel him pressed against my thigh.

"I love you so much, Edward. I need you inside me, please," I whimpered. He shifted his body and I could feel him at my entrance. He brushed my hair away from my face. He leaned and kissed me on the lips as he entered me. He felt so good. He was perfection. He filled me completely. Not just physically, but emotionally as well. He was my rock, my love, my partner, my equal.

Edward sat back on his haunches, and pulled me onto his thighs. "Shit, that's hot," he breathed. He watched as he entered my body. I snaked my hand down between my legs and began rolling my clit with my fingers. His eyes widened and his pace picked up. "You are mine, Bella. I love you so much."

"Only yours, Edward. You make me so happy. I love you," I breathed. I rocked my hips against Edward's legs. His brow was furrowed and I could see a sheen of sweat covering his body. He looked delicious. My breasts were bouncing at Edward's movements. My hand moved faster as I moved closer to my release. "Oh, God. Harder, Edward."

## La Cantante

Edward grabbed my legs and he leaned forward, putting my calves on his shoulders. He slammed his body into mine. "I'm not going to last, beautiful. Come with me. Let go," he panted. His cock drove into me, going deeper than he had ever gone before. I could feel my muscles begin to clench around him. His mouth dropped open and his hips moved more erratically. "Oh, Bella...I'm...shit!" I felt his dick twitch in my body and he arched his body above mine. I came shortly after, my muscles clamping down around his cock.

He collapsed on top of me, breathing heavily. I moved my legs down off his shoulders, wrapping them around his body. I wanted to keep him inside me for as long as possible. He began to pull away and I clamped down on him, not wanting him to move. "I've got be squishing you, beautiful."

"No, you're fine, handsome. It feels good. I feel safe," I breathed into his hair. He held me tighter for a few short moments. He then pulled out of me. We both whimpered at the loss. Edward got up and went to his dresser. He pulled out a t-shirt and a pair of boxers. He pput on the boxers and tossed me the t-shirt. He then bent down and picked up my panties from the floor, handing them to me. I scrambled to put them on and pulled the t-shirt over my head. I shoved the covers down on Edward's bed and got underneath them. Edward followed suit, laying on his back. I cuddled up on his chest and traced circles on his smooth, pale skin. He gave me a kiss on my forehead and he ran his hand up and down my back.

"Are you okay, Bella? Really?" he asked in the darkness.

"I wasn't earlier. The whole thing with Seth upset me and pissed me off. However, I know that I have people who love me. Emmett, Rosalie, Alice, Jasper and most importantly, you. Seth is inconsequential in my life as is Jacob and the whole situation."

"I just hate seeing you so upset. His words were hurtful. I was ready to rip his miserable head off," Edward growled.

"Seth means nothing to me. His words hurt. This is true. However, your words mean more to me than his ever will. I know that I'm not what he called me.

## La Cantante

You know that, too. That's all that matters," I yawned.

"You are my world, Bella. I will do everything in my power to prevent you from being hurt. I love you more than my own life. You're the one," he whispered. "You're tired. I'm tired. Let's enjoy this rare night alone in a dorm room. I love you, baby."

"I love you more, handsome."

"Highly unlikely. Sleep well, my beautiful Bella."

"Good night, Edward."

He held me tightly against his chest. My eyes drooped shut and sleep finally came to me. I was safe in my love's arms. I was happy and I was complete. Edward, in his loving, sweet, gentle way had done so. He was my home. Wherever he went, I was sure to follow.

**A/N: Okay, so I'm getting hit with real life. I just wish I could stay home and write the story as it comes to me. However, I have to work (dammit!). I hope you like this chapter. Please leave a review. They make me happy. They are my own personal brand of heroine. I love reading 'em.**



# Sapphires and Supper

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 31: Sapphires and Supper

### EPOV

*Why am I hearing bells? I didn't drink that much. I shouldn't be hearing random bells! What the fuck?*

I slowly opened my eyes to my bright dorm room. Bella was on her stomach with her arm thrown over my body. I poked my head up and looked around the room. We were still alone. I heard the bells again.

*Seriously? What the hell is that? Oh, it's a phone. I'm such an idiot.*

I extricated myself from Bella's warm body. I just wanted to stay cuddled up with her all day. I rooted around on my desk, looking for my phone. I found it and picked it up.

"Hello?" I mumbled groggily.

"I'll go with you, Edward."

"Alice, what the hell are you talking about? It's too early for cryptic. It's too early for chipper," I said as I yawned.

"Oh, sorry, Big Brother. I know that you want to go shopping for something special for your girl. I need to go to the mall anyway. So, I'll go with you," Alice chirped.

## La Cantante

"How...how did you? How did you know, Pixie?" I asked, dumbfounded. "I was toying with the idea, but hadn't really committed to it."

"It's a gift. Consider me omniscient," she giggled. "Jasper and I should be back to Emerson by 11. We can go to the mall and then out to lunch. It's been too long since we've hung out, Edward."

"You got it, Pixie. See you in a little bit," I said, a smile spreading across my face.

"Bye, Edward."

I turned back to my bed and stared at the brown-eyed beauty gracing it. She was so beautiful. Her mahogany curls were spread out on my pillow. Her heart shaped face was resting on her tiny hands. Her soft lips were slightly puckered, almost awaiting a kiss. My t-shirt had ridden up on her body and the dimples on her lower back were visible, along with her perfect ass. My dick was getting harder as I stared at my beauty, straining in my underwear.

*Yes, I have a serious case of morning wood. Sequoia...*

I stalked back into my tiny bed in my dorm room. I lightly ran my finger tips across Bella's soft, pink cheek. The corner of her mouth moved up into a half smile. She fluttered her long-lashed eyes. She finally opened them and her beautiful coffee-colored eyes met mine. I continued running my fingers along her face, tracing her striking features. "You are so beautiful, Bella."

"Edward, I really think you need to get your eyes checked. I'm not beautiful. I'm quite ordinary," she replied, her voice thick with sleep.

"Ordinary, my ass. You. Are. Beautiful. Inside. And. Out," I said, punctuating each word with a kiss. I then leaned over her back and blew a raspberry onto the exposed skin on her back. She shrieked.

"Edward, that tickles! Stop it!"

## La Cantante

My face spread into a wicked grin and I wiggled my fingers. I attacked her back with my hands and she screamed. "EDWARD! Seriously! Stop it! I have to pee! If you keep it up, I'm going to wet the bed!"

I laughed and stopped my tickle attack. She hopped up and ran into the bathroom. A few moments later, she came back out and padded to the bed. She pushed me back onto the bed and straddled my legs. She had a slight frown on her face.

"What's wrong, beautiful girl?" I asked as I moved my hands to her face.

"What's with the frown?"

"I have a ton of homework to do. Being sick caused me to fall behind in my classes. I have two papers due for Intro to Education: a research paper on a current educational strategy and its effectiveness and my final reflection on my observation hours. I have to work on my huge psychology paper. I have almost all of the research done and I need to plan it out. I have to go to the language lab and do some work for my Italian class. Finally, study for the music theory midterm and U.S. History midterm. There is not going to be enough time to do all of this shit," she grumbled.

"I've got a bunch of work to do, too. Not as much as you. I have to put some finishing touches on my biochem lab report, graphs and stuff. I have about a handful of problems for calculus and studying for the midterm there," I replied sympathetically. "How about this, you spend this afternoon doing your education and psychology stuff. I'll work on my homework and we can study together for theory and U.S. history."

As I was talking, my phone beeped from my desk. I patted Bella's legs and she crawled off of me.

*Mom and Dad called. Want to bring Bella home for dinner tonight? I'm bringing Jas. - A*

*Hold on - E*

## La Cantante

"Alice just texted. My presence has been requested at Chez Cullen. Would you like to come? Alice is bringing Jasper," I said with a crooked grin.

"Do you want to ask Rose and Em?" Bella asked.

"I don't see why not."

"Hand me my phone. I'll text them to find out," she said as she bounced on the bed. I picked up her phone, which I had on my desk. I plugged it in to charge. Bella quickly tapped out a message to both Rose and Emmett. Nearly instantaneously, they replied. "They're cool."

"Great. I'll text Alice and let her know," I replied as I quickly texted my sister. She replied with a smiley face.

"Can I borrow a pair of shorts, Edward? I don't want to walk back down to my room wearing just your shirt. That would not look too good," she giggled.

"I personally like you naked as a jaybird," I growled.

"Edward," she warned.

"Ugh, fine. Take away all of my fun," I grumbled as I pulled a pair of basketball shorts from my dresser. "Pack a bag for tonight. We'll probably end up staying overnight. Bring your laundry, too."

"Yes, dear," she teased. She pulled on my shorts. I don't know why but she looked incredibly sexy wearing my clothes. I felt my cock, who had calmed down, jump back to life. I took a sharp inhale of breath and Bella turned to look at me. She was bending over, picking up her costume and shoes. "What, baby?"

"I like you in my clothes," I said seductively. "Further shows the world that your mine."

## La Cantante

"I like wearing your clothes. They smell like you," she said, looking at me through her insanely long eyelashes. "I do need to go, though. I have a ton of work to do and since we're going to Chez Cullen, I have less time to do what I need to do. I love you so much, Edward."

"I love you, too. I'll send you a text when we're getting ready to go," I said, enfolding her into a hug. I leaned down and placed a soft kiss onto her lips, my tongue licking her bottom lip. She groaned and patted her hands on my chest.

"See you later, handsome. *Ciao, bello*," she said as she breezed out of my room. I gave her a wistful smile as she left. As soon as the door clicked shut, I went to my dresser and pulled out some clothes. I walked to the bathroom to shower.

*Perhaps to address my morning wood. Isabella Swan is too sexy for her own good.*

xx LC xx

After my shower, I worked on my biochem lab report. I was almost done with it and just needed to add some graphs and tables. I created them and inserted them into my report. I saved it to my flash drive and emailed it to Eric. He was always willing to help out with my calculations and to verify my report. I then pulled out my calculus book and calculator. I worked through the assigned problems and reviewed the information in the chapters that would be covered on the midterm. I was almost finished with my calculus work when my phone chirped on my desk.

*Let's go, Green-eyed Freak. I need your muscles to carry all of my purchases -*  
A

*Where are you? - E*

*My car, waiting for your lanky ass - A*

*Be down in a few, Pixie - E*

## La Cantante

I put my calculus book away and grabbed my jacket. It was quickly getting colder. You could taste the snow in the air. There was actually a chance of some measurable snow tonight. I also picked up my wallet and phone. I dashed down the stairs into Alice's car. I pulled open the door and slid into the passenger seat.

"So, what are you thinking of for Ms. Bella?" Alice asked.

"You are so subtle, Pixie," I chuckled.

"I know you, Edward. I'm guessing you are thinking jewelry," she said with a sardonic grin.

"I am thinking jewelry. I want to get her a promise ring. Not an engagement ring, obviously. However, something to show that I promise to propose. I want to get something with a sapphire, as it's her birthstone," I said with a smile.

"She'll love it. How much?" Alice asked.

"I don't care. I received some money from my trust when I turned 18. I put it into my checking account and it's been sitting there for awhile," I explained.

"How much is in the account, Edward?" Alice pressed.

"My checking account or my trust account, Ali?" I replied. Money was something that I was never comfortable talking about with anybody. The only people who knew the actual amount in my trust fund was Esme and Carlisle. My mother and Carlisle both came from money, as their grandparents, my great-grandparents did well in the stock market.

"Whatever you're comfortable sharing, Edward. I know you don't like to talk about it," she said with a wave of the hand.

"Do you promise not to tell anyone? Not Jasper. Especially not Bella. This is something I want to discuss with her. I don't want her to hear how much I'm worth from her roommate," I said, giving Alice a pointed glare. She has a

tendency to be loose-lipped.

"Edward, I promise. I wouldn't want to hurt you or Bella. You're my only brother and she's my best friend. I don't want to drive a wedge between the two of you," she said, reaching across the console to squeeze my knee.

"Okay. I have currently in my checking account approximately \$50,000. That was my first pay-out from my trust fund. It was supposed to be for my education. However, my sperm donor paid my tuition. At least he's good for something. I'll get a larger pay-out when I turn 21 in June," I began.

"How much will you get in June?" she asked quietly.

"Nearly a million dollars. I'll get about the same every other year until I turn 35. At that point, I get the remaining amount in my trust," I said, giving her a wary look.

"Holy fuck, Edward. I knew Carlisle and Esme were rich, but not that rich," she breathed.

"That isn't their money. This money left for me from my mom. I have about twenty million dollars in a trust in my name," I explained.

"Wow. I'm speechless," Alice said as she pulled into the mall parking lot. She gripped the steering wheel and blinked a few times. "Well, I guess I know where I'm taking you for Bella's ring. I know the exact thing she'd love. Let's roll!"

Alice scrambled out of the car and strode to the mall. She led me to a posh jewelry store located there. She pulled my arm to a display case with a bunch of rings. A young saleswoman approached us.

"Hello. My name is Lisette. Is there something that you are looking for today?" she asked kindly.

"I'm looking for a promise ring for my girlfriend," I said with a smile.

## La Cantante

"Are you his girlfriend? If so, you're a lucky girl," Lisette said.

"Ew. No. He's my brother. I'm just giving him advice on what his girlfriend will like," Alice said as she scrunched her nose.

"Sorry about the confusion. You don't look like siblings. I didn't mean to assume," Lisette fumbled.

"No big deal. We're adopted. That's why there is not familial resemblance," I laughed, trying to put her at ease.

"Got it. So, are you looking for diamonds? Gemstones? White gold? Yellow gold?" she inquired, smelling a sale.

"I'm looking for a sapphire ring, possibly with diamond accents. White gold or platinum," I replied.

"This way," she said as she indicated to a display case near the back of the store. There a number of beautiful rings. I immediately saw the ring that I wanted for Bella. It had a large oval shaped sapphire. On the sides of the ring were diamond baguettes and smaller round diamonds. It was set in white gold. I pointed to it and Lisette smiled. She pulled it from the display case and handed it to me. She prattled about the quality of the sapphire and total carat weight of the diamonds. Alice was hanging on my arm, bouncing on her toes. She pulled me down to her and whispered into my ear that the ring was perfect. I gave Lisette a smile and said that I wanted it. She also showed me a matching pendant and earrings. I also decided to get those for Bella. I would give her the pendant and earrings for Christmas and then the ring I'd present to her on New Year's Eve. Lisette wrapped up the jewelry and I paid her. She seemed a bit hesitant when I whipped out my debit card.

*If she only knew how much I was toting around in my checking account. I can easily afford this.*

She totaled up the jewelry and ran my card. To her chagrin, it went through with no problem. I signed the slip, also getting an extended warranty on the



## La Cantante

jewelry. She handed me the bag with my treasures. She said that when I was ready for the engagement ring, she'd be happy to help me. I had exquisite taste.

Alice and I left the jewelry store and she proceeded to drag me all over the mall. She said she needed a ton of new clothes as her current wardrobe was SOOOOOOOOOOO last season.

*Her words, not mine.*

Alice did manage to finagle to buy me some clothes. She insisted that I needed to get a few pairs of new jeans, some sweaters and button up shirts. By the end of the mall excursion, I felt like a pack mule with all of the bags that I ended up carrying. We also went to lunch at Rob's Garage in the mall. I asked her about her relationship with Jasper and her feelings mirrored what he had told me about Alice being his 'lobster.' I was happy that they were together. Alice and Jasper really seemed to complement each other. Jasper, who was normally very calm, negated Alice's hyperness. As we were walking out of the restaurant, I pulled Alice into a hug, kissing the crown of her head.

"Whoa, Edward! What's that for?" she said as she returned the hug.

"For being an awesome sister. Thanks for offering to come today to find Bella's ring. I love you, Ali," I said, pulling away.

"I love you too, Edward. I'm so happy that you and Bella are together. Since you've met her, you smile more, seem happier and I love being around you when you're like that. Not Grumpward," she replied.

"Was I really that bad?" I asked while we walked out to Alice's car.

"Yeah, Big Brother. I know that you were dealing with the doctor issue and turning to Tanya didn't help matters. You were pretty much a bitch," Alice confirmed.

"A bitch? Alice, I'm not a girl."

## La Cantante

"I know that, Edward. However, you were moody, cranky and not fun to be around. You were a bitch. Trust me," she said as she rolled her eyes. "I like you better now. Much better."

Alice popped the trunk and I put our bags in her car. Alice was texting by the rear bumper, keys hanging from her fingers. I snatched the keys and got into the driver's side.

*Christ, she's short. My knees are in my ribcage.*

"Edward Anthony Masen Cullen! Get out of my car. I'm driving home!" she screeched as she pulled on my arm.

"Nope. You snooze, you lose, Pixie. Besides you really do drive like a freaking maniac," I said. Alice glared at me and stomped to the passenger side of the car.

"You suck, Edward."

"Love you, Pixie."

I turned the car on, after I moved the seat back and drove us back to Emerson. It was about a quarter after three and we needed to get on the road. At a stoplight, I pulled out my phone and dialed Bella.

"Hello?"

"Hey beautiful. Alice and I are on our way back from running some errands. Can you and the rest of the gang be ready to go by four?" I asked with a grin.

"Yeah. I actually managed to get a lot done, homework-wise. I was afraid I'd have to bring my laptop to your house, but I got my two papers done for education and a basic framework for my psychology paper done. I missed you, baby."

## La Cantante

"I missed you too, my beautiful girl. I would have rather spent my afternoon with you in bed than in a mall with my sister," I teased. That earned me a sharp smack on the chest by the sprite. "She even bought me some clothes. I felt like a Ken doll." Another smack.

"I feel like a Barbie doll whenever Alice attacks me with her beauty products. She's still playing with her Barbies, but now we're life-sized and have real genitalia," Bella giggled.

"Oh, God! Bella! There is a line and you just crossed it, beautiful," I cried.

"What? It's true! I'd be very traumatized if you just had a flesh-toned pair of briefs and no cock. Seriously, Edward."

"I'm traumatized by this conversation. On that note, I'll see you soon. Love you, perv," I guffawed.

"I'm your perv. Love you too."

xx LC xx

We got back to Emerson and loaded up the cars. We were taking both my car and Alice's car. Alice and Jasper were driving together. Emmett and Rosalie were driving with Bella and me. During our shopping excursion, I texted Emmett and told him to bring his laundry, like I had told Bella. It's so much nicer to use an actual washer and dryer than the industrial ones in the dorm. I tried to do my laundry at home as often as I could because it made my clothes feel better. Maybe I'm a pansy-ass, but I like my clothes to soft and smell good. My OCD-like tendencies are out in full force.

We had Bella and Emmett's laundry in my trunk and Rose decided to bring hers. It was in Alice's car. It'll be a busy night at the Cullen Family Laundry. We had two laundry rooms so it wouldn't be that bad.

As we drove to my parents' home, I asked Emmett, "So, where did you end up last night?"

"Actually, I was in Bella's room."

I saw him give a sidelong glance to Rosalie. Rose gave him a small smile and grabbed his hand. He brought up Rose's hand and kissed it.

*Rose and Emmett? Really?*

"I actually slept in Isabelly's bed. Rosie felt bad for me being kicked out of my room because two horndogs needed to get it on. So, I stayed with her," Emmett replied.

"That explains it. I was wondering why my bed was smelling like boy," Bella giggled.

"I hope you don't mind, Bella," Rose said quietly.

"No, I don't mind. As long as no funny business happened on my bed," she replied as she turned to face her brother.

"Nope. No funny business. That all happened on Rosie's bed," Emmett laughed. Rosalie smacked across the back of the head.

"You are such an ass, Emmett. There was not any funny business. Period. Okay, perhaps a kiss, but that was it!" Rose retorted.

"Ohmigod! A kiss!" Bella squealed.

"Damn it, woman! I think I lost my hearing in my right ear," I teased.

"Sorry, baby. Spill it, Hale," Bella said as she looked at her roommate.

"After the party, you guys went to Edward's room to do, you know. Emmett and I hung out in our room. We watched a movie. I was on my bed and Emmett was on the floor in front of it. I got up about halfway through the movie to go to the bathroom. I pulled a 'Bella' and stumbled over my own feet. I ended up falling into Emmett's lap," Rose said.

"Thank goodness you didn't sprain anything. I would have had to turn into Super-Athletic-Trainer Man. I would take care of you, Rosie," Emmett said sweetly.

Rose smiled at Emmett and patted his cheek. "Anyway, I was on Emmett's lap and we just stared at each other for a moment. Emmett's face then broke into a dimply grin and I relaxed in his arms. "I realized that I could trust him. I reached up and pulled his face to mine and we kissed. It was very sweet, gentle and kind. It was unlike any kiss that I got from Royce."

"It was incredibly special to me too, Rosie. You can trust me. I'd never hurt you. Ever," Emmett said with a sincere smile. He leaned over and kissed Rose on the cheek. She tensed up at first and relaxed at his touch.

"Awwwwwwwwww, Emmett. You really are a big teddy bear. I'm so happy for you guys," Bella exclaimed, bouncing in her seat in an Alice-like fashion.

"We're still taking things slowly," Rose further explained. "However, I really like the direction where things are going." Rose turned and looked at Emmett. She leaned forward and lightly brushed her lips over his. She pulled away and gave him a shy smile. He just beamed.

The rest of the car ride was pretty quiet. Rose and I talked a bit about our dance thing for Express. She was going to kick my ass. She was trying to explain what my part of the duet was going to be and I was at a loss. Bella was sniggering in the front seat at my dilemma. I reached over and poked her in the side. She swatted my hand away and glared at me.

Bella and Emmett talked about their plans for Christmas. They both were planning on spending Christmas in Washington with Charlie. Bella toyed with the idea of going to see her mom. However, in an earlier conversation during the week, it was decided that Bella would spend Easter with her mom. I was inwardly panicking as they were talking. I had purchased an airline ticket to visit Bella. I was leaving New York on December 26th and staying through January 3rd. I had purchased a ticket for Bella to come back with me and spend some time with me and Alice after the first of the year. I had yet to tell her or

## La Cantante

Emmett. I figured I needed to do so and do it soon.

We pulled up to my home and got out of the car.

"Sweet Baby Jesus, Cullen. You live here? Fuck," Emmett enthused.

"Yes, I live here, Emmett. Come on in and let's meet my parents," I said, ushering them inside.

Carlisle and Esme were in the front foyer. Esme immediately embraced Bella saying that she missed her. Carlisle did the same. He raved about the chili that she left for them. He was practically begging her to make some more. I introduced them to Rose and Emmett. Emmett greeted them in his usual, outgoing way. Rose was more reserved.

Alice and Jasper, who had left before us, still had not arrived. I can only imagine what they were doing. I rolled my eyes at the thought.

I grabbed Emmett and we gathered our bags and laundry baskets. We put the laundry into the laundry room and brought the bags upstairs. Rose was staying in the guest room that Bella was originally going to be staying in her first night at my parents' house. Emmett was staying in another guest room close by. Alice and Jasper would be in Alice's room and obviously Bella and I would be together. By the time we dropped off the bags, Alice and Jasper had shown up. Jasper's hair was a little disheveled and Alice's shirt was on backwards.

*That's what I thought.*

They dashed upstairs and dropped off their things. Esme and Carlisle insisted I give Rosalie and Emmett the tour. I showed them around the house. Emmett got really excited when he saw that we had a hot tub and a pool. The hot tub could feasibly be used, the pool not so much. We then headed downstairs to the basement where we had a game room. Emmett challenged me to a game of pool. I told him that we could have it after dinner. Rosalie and Bella snickered at Emmett's antics. Bella called him an eternal child. I can see why now.

## La Cantante

We headed upstairs to the kitchen where dinner was almost ready. Esme had made some beef stroganoff and vegetables. We all settled down at the table and tucked in to dinner. Emmett ate like a horse. He had many helpings of my mom's cooking.

After dinner, we moved into the family room.

"So, Bella and Emmett, what are your plans for Thanksgiving?" Esme asked.

"We're stuck on campus. Neither one of us can afford a plane ticket back home so we get to hang out in good old Patterson," Emmett said sadly.

"That's nonsense! Edward! Alice! I'm surprised you didn't invite them to have Thanksgiving with us," Esme admonished.

"It was never brought up. We'd love to have you come and celebrate Thanksgiving with our family," I said lacing my fingers with Bella's. "I'm sorry I didn't think to ask you sooner."

"It's okay, Edward. I would love to celebrate Thanksgiving here. However, I insist on helping in the preparation of the meal. It's the least I can do since you've been so generous in the offer," Bella said.

"You're a guest, Bella. That would be ridiculous," Esme chided.

"Please, Esme?" Bella asked, with a pout.

"You can help *some*, but not a lot," she said with a grin. "How about you Jasper and Rosalie. What are your plans for Thanksgiving?"

"I was hoping to hang out here, Mama C," Jasper drawled. He walked over and held Esme's hand, kissing her knuckles. "I can deep fry the turkey."

"Of course you can stay here, Jasper. However, no deep frying the turkey. That is a sacrilege to the holiday," Esme giggled.

"Yee haw! Thanks, Mama C!"

"Rosalie?" Esme pressed.

"My family is actually going to be on a cruise over the Thanksgiving holiday. Due to school, I won't be able to go, so I'm like Bella and Emmett. Stuck in Patterson," she replied.

"Then it's settled. You all are going to be here for Thanksgiving. It'll be so much fun!" Esme said, clapping her hands. "When are you all released from school?"

"We have classes on Monday and Tuesday and then we're off for the rest of the week," I explained.

"Fantastic. How about you kids plan on coming to Chez Cullen on Tuesday evening. On Wednesday, the girls and I can go shopping for all of the Thanksgiving necessities and begin preparations. Oh! This is going to be so wonderful," Esme crooned. "Isn't it Carlisle?"

"Definitely. I'm so happy all of you are able to come and celebrate with our family. I'll definitely need the man power to lug out all of the Christmas decorations on Friday. Esme decorates the house to the hilt. Edward and I are her minions, moving boxes around, hanging garland and stringing lights. It'll be pleasant to have more muscle to do the work, right Edward?"

"Hell, yeah. Erm. Yes," I floundered.

"Edward. Language," Esme grumbled.

"Oh come on, Mom. You've heard worse. You've said worse," I shot back.

"Just because I've heard and said worse doesn't mean that's appropriate in this house, Edward Anthony," she scolded. "Watch. Your. Language."

"Yes ma'am," I replied.



## La Cantante

"Ooooh, Edward. You got told by Mama C! Burn!" Jasper snickered.

"Shut it, hick," I said as I chucked a pillow at his head.

We spent a few hours just hanging out with my parents. About nine in the evening, they decided to head upstairs to bed. We went downstairs and hung out in the game room.

"Alright, Cullen! Pool time! You and me," Emmett boomed.

I rolled my eyes. Jasper and the girls went to sit on couches in the basement. Emmett began organizing the balls on the table and I grabbed a couple of pool cues.

"I play the winner!" Jasper said from the couch.

I let Emmett break and he quickly downed two solids. He managed to pocket two more balls before I had the opportunity to play. I managed to get in three striped balls before missing. My heart really wasn't into the game. I just wanted to sit and cuddle with my Bella. Emmett ended up beating me and I was fine with that. Jasper hopped up at the end of our game and he and Emmett went to town. I grabbed Bella's hand and dragged her to a chair in the basement, settling her on my lap. I buried my nose into her soft hair and inhaled deeply, relishing her scent.

"Are you sniffing my hair, Edward? If so, that's a little weird," she giggled.

"You smell good, baby. It's the strongest, well, you know. Your hair is a close second," I said, brushing her hair off her neck, kissing it.

"I know what? I'm confused, Edward," she replied, a frown crossing over her features. I quickly glanced down to her lap. Her eyes widened and her cheeks tinged pink with blush. Then she smacked me. "You are such a perv, Edward. I swear you have sex on the brain."

## La Cantante

"You say that like it's a bad thing," I admonished. "It's a beautiful thing when it's with you, *il mio cantante*."

"I feel the same way, Edward," she replied, brushing an errant hair off of my forehead. She leaned in and brushed soft kisses along my cheeks and my nose. She finished with a soft kiss on my lips, lightly tugging on my hair. "I love you, handsome."

"I love you more, beautiful."

"GAWD! Get a room!" Emmett bellowed by the pool table. I quickly held up my middle finger, flipping him off. Bella hopped off my lap and stomped to where Emmett was standing. She motioned for Emmett to come closer to her. Like an idiot he did and Bella smacked him across the back of the head.

"You are an ass, Emmett McCarty Swan!"

Alice and Rose giggled at their interaction. I stifled a guffaw. Bella walked back to our chair and settled back onto my lap, flipping Emmett off.

"Quit being anti-social, guys. Let's talk, or something," Alice whined from the couch. She pulled the puppy-dog pout and directed it toward Jasper. In a nanosecond, he crumbled. He quickly forgot his pool game with Emmett and went to sit with Alice. Emmett huffed at his forgotten game and sat on the floor by Rose's feet.

"Okay, Pixie. You wanted to talk. What do you want to talk about?" I said, lightly scratching Bella's back. She nestled back against my chest, rubbing her tiny hands along my belly.

"How about twenty questions?" Alice asked with a gleam in her eyes.

"What's that?" Bella asked.

"We all take turns asking questions and go around the room answering them. They can be completely innocent or not," Alice explained. "If you don't

answer, you have to do a dare."

"Are we in middle school, Alice? You used to play this when we were younger," I chuckled. "I remember your friends all screaming and giggling at all hours of the night while you played."

"That's because they all drooled over you, Edward. My friends thought you were hot," Alice admitted. "Come on, guys! It'll be fun."

I rolled my eyes and nodded. Bella shrugged. Emmett and Rose shared a look and nodded yes. Jasper would do anything for Alice.

"Okay, I'll start. What's your major?" Alice said, settling into Jasper's lap.

"Business," Rose answered.

"Athletic Training," Emmett continued.

"Music Education," Bella and I responded together.

"History," Jasper said.

"Fashion Merchandising," Alice concluded. "Rose, you ask the next question."

"Okay. Any place that you want to visit, if money was not an option? And why?" Rose questioned.

"I'd like to go on a hiking excursion in the mountains. Specifically, the Appalachian Mountains," Emmett replied. "I want to wrestle grizzly bears."

Rose looked at Emmett incredulously. He turned back and gave her a dimply smile.

*Only Emmett would want to wrestle grizzly bears.*

## La Cantante

"I would love to go to Italy and tour the world famous opera houses," Bella said with a wistful smile. "If music education doesn't pan out, I'd go into singing professionally. Try to audition for an opera company. It would be nice to see where opera had it's heyday."

"I'd love to backpack across Europe, stopping in Italy to see those opera houses," I said giving Bella a squeeze. "Also, going to the famous cities where the Classical composers were born, traveling down the Moldau River, and bumming around the pubs in England where the groups like The Beatles got their start."

"If possible, I'd go back in time to the Civil War era to see what it was like," Jasper responded. "It was such a turbulent time in history, but also one of the most beautiful."

"That's easy. I'd love to travel to New York and Paris for fashion week and go to all of the fashion shows," Alice chirped.

"I'd travel to Hawaii and just spend the rest of my life there because this cold nonsense sucks," Rose said with a smile.

"Amen to that," Jasper agreed. "Why did I come to upstate New York for college?"

We all chuckled at Jasper's comment. I quickly brushed my lips across Bella's. "I love you, beautiful."

"I love you too, Edward. What was that for?" she asked.

"Just because," I replied giving her a crooked grin.

"Enough, you two. It's truly nauseating watching you suck face," Emmett said with an eye roll. "My turn! Run off your firsts, that you are comfortable with. First kiss, first love, first fuck...you know."

## La Cantante

"God, Emmett, you are so crude," Bella admonished. "First kiss was Jason Brach in the second grade."

"Isabelly, that doesn't count. First REAL kiss," Emmett whined.

"Oh, fine. That was Jacob. First love and first 'fuck' were both Edward," she replied with a blush. "However...never mind."

"What is it Bella?" Alice inquired.

Bella ducked her head and hid behind her hair. I knew she was blushing. I think I understood what she wanted to say. We didn't fuck. We made love. "Our connection is deeper than just fucking," I explained. "That would be too crude to say. Making love is more apt." Bella nodded against my shoulder, still hidden by her hair.

"That's so sweet. And nauseating," Emmett gushed sarcastically. "Your turn, Cullen."

"First kiss was Maggie O'Boyle in ninth grade. It was awful. She tried to shove her tongue down my throat, gagging me. My first sexual experience was with Irina Sullivan. We were both in high school and it happened on choir tour. She was a senior and I was a junior. She had a crush on me and we did 'it.' She ignored me the rest of the time and wouldn't talk to me for the rest of the school year. No meaning there. My first and only love is Bella. She's also the only one I've ever made love to and will be the only one I'll make love to," I said with a gentle squeeze to Bella's ass. Bella turned and gave me a sweet kiss, gently rubbing her hand across my cheek.

"Okay, Jas. Spill it," Emmett boomed.

"First kiss was Charlotte Perleson. It was okay. We knocked noses, but her lips were soft. My first sexual experience was with Maria. My first love was also Maria. Or so I thought. My opinion has since changed. My first true love is Alice. I love you, sugar," Jasper drawled.

## La Cantante

"I love you too, Jasper," Alice said quietly. "Uh, first kiss was Jimmy Karson in 8th grade. My first sexual experience was with Danny McDougal. Um, ew. My first love is Jasper."

"Okay, Rosie. You're next," Emmett said, rubbing soothing circles on her leg.

"First kiss was Brian Mueller in 8th grade. I'm not comfortable sharing my first sexual experience, though most of you know what that was. I am not counting that. So, for all intents and purposes I'm a 'virgin.' I also haven't had my first love yet, but I'm getting closer to realizing who it is," Rose said with a smile. She ran her hand through Emmett's hair and traced her fingers down his cheek.

Emmett shivered and kissed her hand. "My first kiss was Brittany Morgann in 7th grade. I was experienced for my age. My first sexual experience was with Brittany's sister, Tiffany in 9th grade. I'm in the same boat with my first love but I know who it is."

"Awww, Emmy," Bella gushed. "If you had one 'freebie' in regards to sex, who would you want to sleep with?"

"Hmmm, Angelina Jolie. She's hot," I replied. Bella glared at me. "You're hotter, though."

"Penelope Cruz," Jasper said with a seductive smile.

"Johnny Depp," Alice chirped.

"I agree with you, Ali," Rose said. Alice got up and slapped a high five to Rose's hand.

"I'm with you, Cullen. Angelina Jolie."

"Robert Pattinson. He kind of looks like you, Edward," Bella said, kissing my cheek.

## La Cantante

"What? He does not. His hair is all kinds of wrong and he has no ass," I responded defensively.

"I agree with the ass, but his hair is total sex hair, like yours," Bella giggled.

"You are so sleeping on the couch in my room, evil woman," I growled. Her eyes narrowed and she smacked me behind the head. I gave her a playful glare and then kissed her nose. She huffed and turned away. "If you could meet anybody, living or dead, who would it be and why?"

"General Custer. He's my hero," Jasper said with stars in his eyes.

"Versace. He's taken away from us too soon. I loved his designs. Also, Alexander McQueen," Alice replied.

"Hmmm, I'm not sure. I've always wanted to meet The Donald. He has such a shrewd mind," Rose said.

"Walter Payton. He was my hero growing up. He was such an amazing football player," said Emmett.

"I've met him. Eleazar Santiago. He's awesome at what he does and I'm thrilled to have him as a teacher, advisor and mentor," Bella said quietly.

"It's not necessarily meeting someone. More like a reunion. I'd love to spend more time with my mom. She'd absolutely love you, Bella. I really wish she could have met you," I said as I ran my fingers along the curve of her jaw. She leaned in and kissed me. "I love you, beautiful."

"Okay, lovebirds. Favorite city in the United States," Jasper said.

"New York City," both Alice and Rose said.

"Seattle," responded Bella and Emmett

"Chicago," I said.

"Atlanta," replied Jasper.

We continued the game for another hour or so. Bella was getting heavier on my lap and I could see her eyes were at half-mast. The rest of the group had similar expressions on their faces. We gathered our things and headed upstairs to bed. Bella went into my bathroom and changed into a pair of pajamas. I pulled out a pair of flannel pants and pulled them on. I crawled into bed and burrowed myself into the mound of pillows. Bella emerged from the bathroom a few moments later. She was wearing the shirt that I gave her last night and a pair of flannel pajama bottoms. She had on her glasses and her hair was pulled into a messy bun. She sleepily got into bed after she took off her glasses. I held my arms open and she cuddled against my bare chest. She pressed a kiss right above my heart and wrapped her arms around my waist. I gently ran my fingers through her hair until her breathing evened out. I kissed the crown of her head. "I love you so much, beautiful. Thank you for being with me." I shut my eyes and slowly drifted to sleep, holding my love in my arms.

**A/N: Okay, a bit of fluff. Anyhow, I hope you are liking what you are reading. If you are, please leave a review. Up next will be some lemony goodness, Edward and Rose's dance rehearsal, and a trip to Toronto.**



# Snow, Snow, Snow, Snow

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 32: Snow, Snow, Snow, Snow

### BPOV

"IT SNOWED! IT SNOWED!"

*What the fuck? Who is bellowing at...I can't even see the fucking clock.*

I grumbled and threw a pillow over my head. I faintly heard Edward telling whoever was yelling to shut the hell up. He then pulled me to his body, burying his face into my hair.

"Too early," he mumbled.

"Yes, too early," I replied, gently patting his head. "Sleep, baby. Maybe the snow screamer will disappear."

We heard the door fly open. "IT SNOWED! IT SNOWED! Get up you guys!"

"No such luck, beautiful," Edward muttered. He poked his head up and growled. He picked up a pillow from his bed and tossed it at the offending voice. "Must you do this EVERY TIME it snows, Mary Alice?"

"Yes, Edward Anthony. It's tradition," she replied. "Get your lazy asses up out of bed and we're making snow angels, building a snow fort, and having a snow ball fight."

## La Cantante

"Alice. We're in college. Not elementary school," I said into the pillow. "I'm not going to freeze my ass off in 'God's Dandruff,' thank you very much."

"Go bother someone else, Mary Alice. I'm warm. I'm happy. I'm cuddled with my beautiful girlfriend. I don't want to go freeze my 'nads off," Edward snapped. "I'm quite attached to them."

"Everyone else is up, Grumpward. Come on!" Alice screeched. She ran to the bed and threw back the covers. I crawled into a fetal position against Edward's chest. He wrapped himself around me.

"Fuck! Alice! You are cruel and mean and you just suck!" Edward roared. She then put her hands on Edward's back. "And you're fucking FREEZING! Did you put your hands in a snow bank?" he asked as he jumped out of bed.

"Yep. You're up now. Let's get our snow on!"

"I hate you, Mary Alice Brandon Cullen. You are the spawn of Satan," Edward said as he narrowed his eyes.

"I'll tell Bella..." Alice began. Edward took off like a shot. Alice screamed and ran out of his room. I could hear them scramble down the stairs. I pulled on my glasses and went out in the hallway, slowly descending the stairs. I heard a screech and I saw Edward holding Alice over his shoulder. He slipped on a pair of shoes and threw her into a huge pile of snow. She made a snowball and tossed it. It hit Edward's bare shoulder. He glared at his sister and turned on his heel. He stomped back inside, up the stairs, grabbing me around my waist and pulling me back into his room. He slammed his door and locked it.

"Evil little snow fairy," he muttered angrily. He took my hand and led me back to the bed. He collapsed on his back, pulling me with him, straddling his legs. He held me tight against his cold chest. "Warm me up, love."

I ran my hands up and down his arms and curled up on his chest. He was shivering and his lips were a bit blue. I pressed my own lips to his frigid ones. "Better?" I asked against his lips.

## La Cantante

"Getting there," he replied, angling my head to deepen the kiss. His tongue darted into my mouth and I moaned. "Now, I'm feeling warmer."

I snaked my hands up to his hair and pressed kisses along his jaw. I moved to his ear lobe and nibbled on it. He groaned and he put his hands on my ass. He slipped his fingers into my pajama pants. I shrieked and hopped off of him.

"Holy shit, Edward. Your hands are like ice!" I screeched.

He sat up and leaned back on elbows. "Blame the snow sprite."

I rolled my eyes and walked back to the bed. I plopped down next to him. "Alice said something about telling me..." Edward's eyes widened. "Are you mad at me, Edward?"

"No, baby. Nothing like that. I promise you. There are a few things that I want to tell you," he began. We were interrupted by loud banging on the door. "I guess I'm telling you later."

"No screwing in there! It's snowing and we want to play," Emmett boomed.

"You have a snow sprite. I have the abominable snow monster," I grumbled. "I'd rather deal with the snow sprite."

"Me too, beautiful," he said with a wistful grin. "Let's go freeze our asses off with the crazies."

I shrugged noncommittally. Edward's eyes darkened and he pounced. He was straddling my legs, wiggling his fingers. "If I have to go out there, risk freezing off my dick, so do you, Swan." His fingers attacked my sides and I screamed. I tried to buck him off of my legs but he was too heavy. I was laughing so hard I was crying.

"Edward! Stop! I'll go! Jeez! You are the spawn of Satan. Not Alice," I giggled. "Get up. You're heavy and you're sitting on my bladder."

## La Cantante

"I am not heavy! Take that back, Bella," he whined.

"Okay, let me rephrase," I said, pursing my lips. "You're heavy. Get off me!"

"Meanie," he grumbled as he got off my legs. He sat cross legged on the bed, giving me the stink-eye. I walked to the bathroom and as I closed the door I stuck my tongue out at him.

"You can do so much more with the tongue, Isabella," he called out.

I fumbled in the bathroom, brushing my teeth and putting my contacts in. I breezed out of the bathroom, pulling out a pair of jeans and hoodie. "I could. But you're just too big. I mean huge. You squished me. Lard ass."

"You wound my ego, Bella. I'm not heavy," he pouted. He looked down at his six-pack abs and began poking at the non-existent fat there. "You're giving me a complex."

"Edward, we both know that you're pretty close to perfect. I'm just giving you shit," I said, running my hands through his hair. "You are not fat. Sheesh. I mean, your muscles have muscles. You can give Michaelangelo's *David* a run for his money, you're so built. Better hung, too."

"Okay, you're forgiven. I'm sorry I squished you," he said, giving me a crooked smirk. He got up and smacked my ass as he walked past. He pulled out a pair of jeans and a sweatshirt. He went into the bathroom and I heard his fumbling. I opened the bedroom door and headed downstairs. I wandered into the kitchen, where I heard everyone talking. I walked over to the coffee maker, grabbed a mug and poured myself a cup of coffee.

"Morning, Bella!" Alice chimed.

"You are evil, Snow Pixie," I giggled.

"I know. Are we ready to have some fun the white goodness that fell overnight?" Alice asked. Jasper came and rubbed her shoulders.

## La Cantante

"Is she always like this, Mama C?" Jasper laughed.

"With the first snow? Yes. It's only gotten worse with age. I thought she was bad as a child; it has grown exponentially more rambunctious," Esme said with a smile.

"I can attest to that! Your a...butt is mine, Pixie!" Edward announced as he walked into the kitchen.

"Edward Anthony..." Esme warned.

"Esme Caroline..." Edward mimicked.

Esme walked over and glared at her son with her hands on her hips. Edward mirrored her stance, towering over her small frame. A moment later, her face broke into a smile and she poked him in his belly. He dodged the poke and gave her a hug. "I caught myself, Mom."

"Yes, you did. Barely," she laughed. "Breakfast is almost ready."

"Blueberry pancakes! I wish Renee would take lessons from you, Mama C!" Emmett said from the table.

"Who's Renee?" Esme asked.

"She's our mother," I explained. "Her cooking style is very experimental, to say the least."

"Experimental? That's too kind, Isabelly. Half of the stuff is inedible," Emmett blanched.

"Okay. I concede. Her concoctions are inedible. I took over cooking duty at a young age so I could guarantee the taste quality of our food. I mean, who serves chocolate covered fried pickles with mayonnaise?"

## La Cantante

"That sounds absolutely disgusting," Carlisle said as he walked into the kitchen. "Do I even want to know?"

"It was a meal that my mother attempted when Emmett and I were kids. Nasty and foul," I shuddered.

"I can only imagine," Carlisle laughed. "Mary Alice, could you have been any louder this morning? I don't think the neighbors heard your yelling about the snow."

"I could have, Dad. I really could have. You know how excited I get about the snow!" she enthused.

"Yes, WE know how excited you get about the snow," Carlisle said gesturing to his family, "THEY do not."

"At least it happened here as opposed to at school," Edward reasoned. "I think the entire dorm would have staged a mutiny and thrown Alice out."

"You suck, Edward," Alice whined.

"Yeah, okay, Evil Snow Sprite. You're the one who put your freezing cold hands on my back. You're the one who threw a snowball at my shoulder. My BARE shoulder. You're the one who woke me and Bella out of a very comfortable sleep for your shenanigans. If anyone sucks, that would be you," Edward snickered. "If I get sick, I'm blaming you."

"Okay, enough, you two," Carlisle said, wading between his two children.

"Alice, apologize to Edward. It wasn't necessary to do those things to him this morning. Also apologize to Bella."

"Sorry, Edward," she said shortly. "Sorry, Bella."

"Edward, apologize to Alice."

"What? I did nothing wrong!" Edward argued.

## La Cantante

"You were teasing your sister. Apologize," Carlisle said in his 'dad-voice.'

"Sorry, Pixie," he grumbled.

Rose, Jasper, Emmett and I were by the kitchen table, silently laughing at Daddy C putting the pimp-daddy-smack down. As soon as they were done apologizing to each other and forced to give each other a hug, we all broke out in a roar of laughter. Both Alice and Edward glared at us. Rose nearly fell out of her chair, she was laughing so hard.

At that moment, Esme had finished the pancakes and put a huge platter of them onto the table. We all tucked into the pancakes. Emmett ate most of them. I swear, that boy can eat just about anything. And exorbitant amounts of it as well. After breakfast, Alice started bouncing in her seat. As usual, Jasper tried to calm her down, but her Mexican jumping bean impersonation was too strong. He gave up after a few tries.

"Come on, you slackers! Let's go have some fun in the snow!" Alice squealed as she took off, grabbing her coat and gloves. We all just sat at the table, mesmerized by her antics.

Edward took my hand into his large one, pleading with his eyes, "If we ever have children, I sincerely hope they are not like Alice when it comes to the snow."

*Children! What?*

"We'll move to Seattle. We get much more rain than snow. Problem solved," I said with a shaky smile.

"You're brilliant, Bella," he said as he kissed my forehead. "Why so hesitant, though?"

"It's nothing. Don't worry about it," I replied with a dismissive wave of the hand.

## La Cantante

"Nothing my behind. Something is bothering you," he said, raising his brows.

"Children? Edward we've barely been together for two months and you're talking children?" I squeaked.

"I've told this before: you're it for me. However, if you don't want kids, I'm okay with that," he said, somewhat dejectedly.

"Liar. I do want children and I do want them with you. I guess I was just thrown," I replied honestly.

"I understand. I love you, my beautiful Bella," he said kissing my nose. As he leaned in, Alice raced into the kitchen and rubbed something onto Edward's neck. "Fucking-a, Mary Alice! You snowed me? Your ass is mine!"

"Edward, watch your....Oh never mind. Go kick her ass, Edward," Esme said with a grin. Edward jumped out his chair and grabbed his coat. He raced out after his sister into their backyard. The rest of us grabbed our jackets and watched the craziness ensue. Edward was chasing Alice all around the backyard, pelting her with snowballs. Alice was shrieking as each snowball hit her. She would try to hit Edward with snowballs but failed to do so every time. Jasper came to the aid of his girlfriend and proceeded to throw snowballs at Edward. I jumped in and creamed Jasper, hopping on his back, rubbing snow down his shirt. An all-out snow war ensued for the next half hour.

After our snow war, Edward and I went back inside. Alice had apologized and promised never to attack Edward again with the snow. Esme and Carlisle had to run to the store and do some other errands. They would be back sometime in the late afternoon. They made us promise to stay until dinner.

I needed to do some laundry. Our laundry was upstairs. I decided to do both Edward's and my laundry together. I quickly separated the loads into our two baskets. I put one load into the huge washer when I heard a light scuffle.

"That's hot," Edward murmured.



## La Cantante

"Only you would think that me doing laundry is 'hot.' You are so bizarre, Edward," I said with a roll of the eyes.

"Okay, the laundry part, not so hot. Combining our laundry together, that's the hot part," he said, his eyes nearly black.

I gulped and looked into his darkened orbs. "Explain."

"Our clothes are getting it on in the washing machine. Our underwear is mingling with each other. Our jeans are being twisted together," he purred.

*Who would have thought that Edward describing our clothes being washed together would be so...sexy.*

Edward turned and shut the laundry room door and locked it.

*Holy Crow!*

He stalked to me, his eyes predatory. He took the shirt that I was holding in my hands and dropped it into the laundry basket. He kicked the basket out of the way and he wrapped his large hands around my waist, thrusting his hips against mine. "I want you, Bella."

*Gah! This is so clandestine.*

I looked up at him and he looked so hot. His cheeks were flushed from being outside. His hair was in its usual disarray, slightly darker from being wet. His eyes were barely green. His cold hands went to cup my cheeks. He leaned down and brushed his lips with mine. I sighed as he kissed me. His kisses became more insistent and his hands moved down my sides. He bent down and picked me up, placing me on top of the washing machine. My hands twisted into his damp hair, angling his face to deepen the kiss. I moved my tongue into his warm mouth, caressing him. He groaned and pulled me closer to him.

I reached down and tugged on his hoodie, pulling it over his head. He was wearing a gray thermal shirt under his hoodie and we quickly divested that

article of clothing as well. He went to kiss me again, but I put my fingers to his lips, stopping him. His mouth turned down in a frown. I lightly began to trace my fingers along his face, down his nose, the curve of his jaw, moving down his neck, and across his collarbones. I scratched my nails down his torso, feeling the ridges of his muscles. I leaned forward and placed open mouthed kisses across his pectoral muscles, lightly nibbling on his nipples.

"Oh, God. Bella, that feels so good," he said as he stroked my face. I looked up at him through my eyelashes and smiled against his skin. I raised an eyebrow and continued kissing his chest and torso. He gently cupped my chin and brought his face down to mine, plunging his tongue into my mouth. His hands moved to my hoodie and they slipped underneath. He moved the heavy cotton up and off of my body. His finger tips ran along the tops of my breasts and dipped into the cups of my bra. He played with my nipples, rolling them in his expert fingers. He reached behind me and unclasped my bra and tossing it on to the floor. He ducked his head and pulled one of my breasts into his mouth. My head fell backward and I leaned against the edge of the washing machine. I moaned and Edward's mouth covered mine. "You've got to be quiet, love."

I nodded and fisted my hands into his soft hair. His arms wrapped around me and pressed his body to mine. "You feel so good against me, baby. It was like you were made just for me. I love the feeling of your skin against mine," Edward growled.

I let out a small whimper. Edward's hand traveled to the button of my jeans and he quickly popped it. He slowly lowered the zipper and eased the jeans off my hips. His fingertips traced small circles on my thighs, inching closer to where I wanted him the most. "Edward, please."

"Please, what, love?"

"I need you."

"You need me to do what, Bella?"

"To touch me. I need to feel you," I sighed.

"Gladly, beautiful," he said with a smirk. His fingers moved up to the waistband of my panties. He hooked his fingers and dragged them down my legs. He knelt in front of me, on the floor, pulling me to the edge of the washer. He spread my thighs with his hands. He leaned forward and pressed open mouthed kisses to the insides of my thighs. He bit down and I gave a quiet yelp. My hips were moving of their own volition, begging him to make me come. His eyebrow quirked up and he gently ran his fingers up and down my slit. "You're so wet, Bella. So responsive."

"Ungh, Edward. Please," I pleaded.

"Please what? What do you want?" he pressed.

"I want to feel your tongue on me," I said quietly, blush covering my whole body.

"Hmmmm," he said as he leaned forward. He gave a quick flick of his tongue to my clit. My hips bucked. He moved closer and swirled his tongue around my clit and slipped two fingers into me. "You taste so good, baby." I looked down at Edward and his eyes gazed at mine.

*That is fucking hot.*

His hand pumped into my wet, moist heat and his tongue lapped on my sensitive nub. My hips moved against his face and hand. "You are so fucking hot, Bella." He pulled my clit into his teeth and continued to flick it with his tongue. I could feel that I was close. My breathing was erratic. I moved my hands to my breasts and began fondling them. I threw my head back and tried not to scream. He added a third finger and moved faster in my core. He bit down on my clit and it was my undoing. I squeezed my eyes shut and let out a silent scream as I rode out my orgasm. I faintly heard Edward's belt buckle and jeans fall to the floor. He pulled me closer to him and entered me quickly, causing me to come again. He heaved a sigh at the sensation.

He moved in and out of me slowly. He looked into my eyes and pulled me to his face. He gave me a searing kiss and one of his hands went to my breast. "I

## La Cantante

love you, Bella. You feel so amazing. I will always want you," he panted.

"I love you so much, Edward. I love feeling you inside me. It feels so good," I replied. His thrusting was increasing speed. I could see sheen of sweat over his perfect body. I reached down between us and I began pinching my clit. He looked down and watched our connection.

"That is so fucking perfect. I want to feel you come around my cock, Bella," he breathed. "Shit." He increased his speed and angled his body to deepen his thrusts. He was slamming into me and I could feel myself begin to unravel. He leaned forward and pulled my breast into his mouth, biting down on my nipple. My muscles clenched and clamped down onto Edward's cock. He removed his mouth from my breast and plunged his tongue into my mouth, silencing the impending scream. He groaned into my mouth as I felt his dick twitch and release into me. He lifted me up and off the washing machine and settled us onto the floor, still connected the most intimate of ways. My legs were wrapped around his waist.

He gave a light chuckle and he pulled out of me. I frowned at the loss. "I will never think of laundry in the same light ever again. It is my new favorite chore," he said as he kissed me. "I love you, beautiful."

"I love you too, handsome," I said, pushing a wayward lock out his eyes. "We probably should go find our crazy friends/siblings. They're probably wondering where we're at."

"Meh. I'd rather be in here with you, enjoying my new favorite chore," he said with a wicked grin.

"If that's the case, we'll just have to have sex everywhere so I won't have to lift a finger," I giggled.

"Your wish is my command. Should we try the kitchen or basement," he said with glint in his eyes.

"Perv."

## La Cantante

"But I'm your perv," he said with a chuckle. "Come on, you're right we do need to back out there." He gracefully stood up and went to the door.

"Um, Edward?"

"Yes, love?"

"As much as I love seeing you naked, I don't think the rest of the group," I giggled. "Your nakedness is for my eyes only."

He looked down and blushed. "Oops. You are so hot that you made me forget that I was naked as the day I was born." He bent down and pulled on his jeans and threw the gray thermal over his head. I stood up and pulled on my clothing. With each article, Edward pouted more.

"What, Edward? What's with the sad face? We just had sex in your laundry room," I said.

"You're clothed. I love you naked," he said with a quivering lip.

"I love you naked, too. However, siblings and roommates? They would not appreciate the lack of clothes," I said with a grin.

"Okay, fine. I guess you can wear... *clothes*."

"Dork."

"I know and I'm proud that I'm a dork," Edward said with a silly grin. "Come on."

xx LC xx

We spent the rest of the afternoon just hanging out. Edward and I studied with Jasper for our U.S. History test for a couple of hours and then we studied for our music theory midterm. Edward even volunteered to help with the laundry I started.

*I wonder why? Just kidding!*

We stayed through dinner and left a little before six. Esme and Carlisle gave us all hugs, saying they were looking forward to Thanksgiving. She asked for my email and she said that we would plan the menu for the dinner. She also asked for any special recipes that Emmett and I would want. I said I would send them to her later this week. As we were leaving, Edward was talking to Emmett. He appeared to nervous as he was talking to my brother, but then my brother enveloped him in a huge hug, picking Edward up off the ground. He put my boyfriend down and clapped him on the shoulder. He and Rosalie then scrambled into Alice's car. Edward ambled toward me, lacing his fingers with mine and led me to his Volvo. I slid into the passenger seat and he got in the driver's side. He pulled away from the house, giving his parents a wave as we left.

"How come Rose and Em are riding with Alice?" I asked.

"You know the conversation we started in my bedroom this morning?" I nodded. "I want to finish it. I don't want anyone hearing what I want to say to you."

"It's not bad, is it?" I inquired.

"Heavens, no! There are two things I wanted to talk to you about. The first thing is what are you doing New Year's Eve?" Edward asked.

"Um, nothing? New Year's Eve is a bit of a sore spot, if you know what I mean," I mumbled quietly.

"Right, the mongrel. Asshat."

"Why are you asking what I'm doing on New Year's Eve?"

"I was wondering if you would ring in the New Year. With me," Edward asked expectantly.

## La Cantante

"I would love to, Edward. However, I can't afford a plane ticket to New York. I barely managed to pay for the ticket..." I began.

"I'm planning on flying out to you in Seattle. I actually made reservations at the Fairmount Olympic for New Year's Eve. I'm coming in on December 26th and flying back here on January 3rd. I'd like you to come back with me on the third," he said sheepishly.

"Edward, I can't afford it. I'd love to come back with you, but I can't possibly pay for a ticket here and then another one back to Seattle," I said sadly.

"What would you say if I told that I already bought your ticket?"

"I'd smack you and call you a fool, Edward."

"Shit."

"EDWARD ANTHONY MASEN CULLEN! You didn't buy me a ticket, did you?" I screeched.

"I did. I purchased my ticket to visit you and I wanted you to come back with me. I purchased two tickets for the return flight. It's going to suck not being with you on Christmas and I want to spend as much time with you as I can. Please, let me do this for you, baby. Remember? Spoiling you?" he said with a lopsided smirk.

"How am I going to afford a ticket home? I need to go back to Seattle to get my stuff to head back to school," I reasoned.

"Easy, just bring it with you. You can stay here with me and my family. Esme loves you. Carlisle loves you. Alice would love a shopping partner," Edward snickered.

"Ugh, fine. However, I owe you a smack and you are a fool. How are you able to afford all of this? You're a college student, just like me."

## La Cantante

"That's the other thing I wanted to talk to you about. You obviously have seen where I live. Esme and Carlisle have money. Anyhow, Carlisle and my mom, Elizabeth was born into a lot of money. Their grandparents struck it rich in the stock market and managed to make it grow. When they died, they left their hefty stock portfolio to parents and ultimately to them. When my mother died, she set up a trust fund for me, as her inheritance was deferred to her only son. Me. When I turned 18, I received a payment of \$50,000 to be used for my education. My sperm donor decided to pay for my education and so that money was placed into a checking account in my name."

"So you have \$50,000 in your checking account?" I squeaked.

"Roughly. I work over the summer at a local music store giving piano and guitar lessons. All of that money goes in there as well. Anyhow, that's not all. When I turn 21, I'll get the next installment of my trust. I'll get that in June," Edward explained.

"How much is that payment? You know what, I don't want to know," I said quietly.

"Bella, I want you to know. This is going to affect you, too," Edward said gently.

"How is it going to affect me?"

"I've told you numerous times that you're it for me. What's mine is yours," he said, reaching his hand across the console, linking his fingers with mine. "I plan on making you my wife and my money will be your money."

"Edward. I don't know what to say," I said, complete awestruck.

"I want you to know. Please don't get upset. When I turn 21, I'll get one million dollars. I'll keep getting that amount every other year until I turn 35. At that point, I'll get the remainder of my trust, to the sum of approximately twenty million dollars."



"Edward, pull over," I said quickly.

He pulled onto the shoulder of the highway and I bolted out of the car. I stepped into the cold and placed my hands on my knees. I felt Edward kneel next to me as I struggled to catch my breath. "Bella?"

"I'm okay, Edward. I just needed some air. This is a lot of information to process," I said weakly. "Why didn't you tell me earlier?"

"It's not something I like to broadcast. I don't want people thinking I'm such rich, spoiled brat who doesn't want to work. On the contrary, I'd rather work than have everything handed to me on a silver fucking platter. I haven't told anyone, really. I just recently told Alice and obviously Esme and Carlisle know. However, I want you in my life, for the rest of my life. You need to know. I love you, Bella. It's my main concern to make sure that you are happy and taken care of," Edward said sincerely. "You are my life now."

"When we do get married, I'm so signing a pre-nup," I said with a grin.

"No way. Ain't going to happen. If you leave me, you might as well take everything because I'm nothing without you," Edward said seriously.

"I don't plan on leaving you, baby. I just don't feel comfortable..." I began. Edward cupped my chin and gave me a sweet, loving kiss.

"I want to take care of you. I want to spoil you. I want to love you. Please let me," he said kissing me. I nodded and snaked my hands around his waist, resting my head onto his chest. He held me for an immeasurable amount of time before he tugged me back to the car. "We need to head back to campus. We have that test in theory and I get to get my ass kicked by Rosalie tomorrow."

I snorted against his warm chest. "That's right. Your pas de deux rehearsal is tomorrow. Have fun with that, baby!" I giggled as I extricated myself from his grasp. I got back into the passenger seat and we drove off to campus.

## La Cantante

"You're going to be there, too. Remember? Rosalie requested your presence."

"Oh, crap."

xx LC xx

We got back to Patterson and gathered our things. Edward carried my laundry basket full of clothes up to my room. I went to my mailbox and Edward's mailbox to get our mail. He had handed me his keys as we got out of the car. I noticed a large envelope in his box. I picked it up and got my mail and went up to my room. Edward was sitting on my bed, talking to Alice when I came upstairs. I took off my coat and sat down on the bed next to Edward. I handed him his mail and his brow furrowed at the large envelope in his hands. I shrugged and opened the few things that I had.

Edward opened his envelope and his face blanched when he pulled out the contents. He threw the envelope on the floor and jumped away from it like it was a poisonous snake. I was startled at his reaction. I looked down at the envelope and saw what was inside. Or least one of the things that was inside. It was a large photo, taken from Friday. It was a telephoto shot of me and Edward in his room, in a heated embrace.

"Call one of the detectives, Bella," Edward said in strained voice.

I picked up my phone and dialed Detective Lutz.

"Lutz," he said gruffly.

"Hello Detective. This is Isabella Swan. You and your partner are working on my potential stalking case," I said nervously.

"Yes. Is everything alright, Ms. Swan?"

"No. My boyfriend got a package in the mail. No return address with pictures," I answered.

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"Okay. Ms. Swan, I need you and your boyfriend to come down to the station and bring the pictures. Do not touch them. Put them into a plastic bag. Also, I want both of you to check your email. Bring in your laptops as well," he explained professionally.

"Okay, Detective. We'll be there in a little bit." I turned to look at Edward and he was eyeing the package warily. "Edward, check your email. See if you got any questionable emails sent to you. If you do, bring your laptop with you."

He nodded and pulled me into an embrace. "I'm so sorry, baby."

"It's not your fault, Edward." He pulled away from hesitantly and dashed up to his room. I bent down and picked up the envelope, using a plastic bag. I stuffed them inside and put the offending package onto my bed. I turned to my laptop and logged into my email program. Detective Lutz's suspicions were confirmed as I had another email from a private sender.

*To: Isabella Swan; Edward Cullen*

*From: Private*

*Re: Will you ever learn?*

*My dearest Bella and fucking Cullen,*

*I had a close friend check in on you this weekend and he sent me some pictures. I was quite disturbed at what I saw. When will you ever learn that you are MINE, Isabella. You will always be mine. Cullen is a distraction. You'll come back to me.*

*Cullen, I suggest you watch your back. My friend was not happy that you got in his face this weekend. If it wasn't for his roommates, you would be dead. That would be a lovely sight. You, dead. Out of the way. Not fucking my Isabella.*

*This is my last warning. Stay away from my girl. If you don't, there will be consequences.*

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*Isabella, I love you and I know that you're going to come back to me.*

*Yours,*

*Secret Admirer*

I gulped down the bile that gathered in my mouth. Alice came behind me, as did Rose. They both read the email. They put their arms around me and I held onto them with dear life. I blinked away a few tears and wiggled out of their embrace. I shut down the email program and logged off the computer. I put my computer and the pictures into my computer bag. I turned when I heard the door click open. Edward had his bag over his shoulder and his face was stained with tears. He strode over to me and pulled me into a tight hug. As soon as his strong arms were around my body, I began sobbing. I also felt Alice and Rose place their arms around us. Rose let go first and got her keys from her desk. She pulled on Edward's jacket and he led us out of the door. He slung my computer bag over his shoulder. We were halfway to the car when I realized that I didn't have a coat. Edward handed the bags to Alice who was trailing behind us and slipped his jacket over my shoulders. He then put both of his arms around me and we walked to Rosalie's car. She and Alice got in the front seat and Edward and I got in the back seat.

Rose drove us to the police station. Rose had called Emmett and told him to meet us there. "The police will probably want our statement about what happened at the party on Friday," she explained. She parked her car and we all got out. Detective Lutz and Detective Raisor were waiting in the lobby with looks of concern on their faces. Edward handed our computer bags to Detective Lutz and he went off to get the email information off of our computers. I had taken out the pictures from my bag and handed them to Detective Raisor. She led us to a small conference room where she took our statements. Emmett and Jasper came about ten minutes later and gave their statements to the detectives.

Detective Raisor looked at the pictures with a look of disgust. "Who do you think took these?"

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"Seth Clearwater. He's a student and a friend of Jacob's. He goes to school at Stewartson College, about forty-five minutes from here," I sniffled.

"Any relation Leah Clearwater?" Detective Raisor asked.

"He's her brother," I explained.

"So, you ran into Seth at a party on campus. He was there with his roommates. He started talking to you and then insulted you and your relationship. Edward, you got into Seth's face. Did you throw any punches?" Detective Raisor questioned.

"No. I wanted to, but didn't," Edward replied, squeezing my hand.

"Did you throw any punches, Mr. Swan?"

"No. Like Edward, I wanted to," Emmett barked.

"Did Seth leave after the scuffle at the party?"

"His friends dragged him out of The Chapel. That's the common area in the Rathburn dorm. We didn't see him after the incident," I said quietly.

"Why do you think Seth took these pictures, Bella?"

"He's a photography minor. He's always got a camera attached to his face. He would know how to take these pictures and not be seen," I replied.

"How do you know he's a photography minor?" Detective Raisor pressed.

"He mentioned it on Friday in our conversation," Emmett said with a scowl.

"Okay. We're going to bring in Mr. Clearwater for questioning. We will set up another trace to see where this email came from. It's obvious that he's escalating. Bella, I highly suggest that you do not go anywhere unescorted. Also, take this. It's pepper spray. Use it against an attacker and it will

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temporarily blind them so you can run away. Edward, I also suggest that you don't go anywhere unescorted. I am also going to notify campus security. We're going to make sure that Mr. Clearwater is not allowed back on Emerson property. I'm also going to file a restraining order on behalf of you and Edward against Seth. Keep it on you at all times. If you see him, dial 911 and the police will escort him off the premises and haul him off to jail."

Detective Lutz burst into the conference room. "We got him. He used his own computer. The email was traced back to a William Black in La Push. We'll have to inform the local PD to arrest him, but we got him."

I smiled at the news. Hopefully, this will all be behind me soon enough. Detective Lutz gave Edward and I our computers back and we were done at the police station. As we were leaving, Det. Raisor informed us that we will need to pick up our restraining orders tomorrow afternoon. She also said that if anything else happens for us to call her. She gave me and Edward a brief hug and we headed back to campus.

Suffice it to say, studying didn't happen. We went back into my room and Edward pulled me to his chest on my bed. He held me so tightly. I wasn't complaining. I felt safe and secure in his arms. I nestled into his arms and inhaled deeply against his chest. I breathed in his scent of soap, some light cologne and his unique musky scent. My eyes drifted shut and I could barely hear Edward and Rose talking. I couldn't care what they were saying. Eventually sleep claimed me and the nightmares assaulted my mind.

xx LC xx

*It's dark. It's cold. It's damp. I could hear loud breathing. My wrists hurt. My head was pounding. My side was killing me. I was sitting in an uncomfortable chair. I cracked open my eyes and tried to focus them on where I was. It was too dark. I could only make out faint shadow. I shook my head trying to clear the cobwebs. As my head moved, the lights flicked on. I squinted my eyes at the sudden change in the brightness. I blinked and focused my eyes on a tall figure in the corner of the room. His back was to me.*

*He was tall and muscular. He had raven black hair that was pulled into a messy ponytail. He turned and faced me and it was Jacob. However, it was not the Jacob I remembered. Not the Jacob who always had a radiant smile on his face. This Jacob had a sneer on his features. His eyes were filled with pure hatred. He stalked over to me. As he walked over to me, I could see two other people in the room. They were also tall and muscular like Jacob. They flanked Jacob's sides, their eyes blazing in anger and loathing. Jacob lifted his hand and backhanded my cheek.*

*" You slut. You're mine."*

*" I'll never be yours, Jacob," I spat. He hit me again and kicked the chair out from underneath me.*

*" You are a fucking whore. A tease. You led me on for all those years. Now you're going to pay," he breathed against my cheek. His breath was rancid. He picked me up by the scruff of my neck. His minions came to my sides and held my arms. Jacob reared back and punched me solidly in the gut. I felt all of the air leave my body as I bent over in pain. He hit me again. And again. And again. Until I was on my knees. He roughly pulled my chin up and he kissed me, plunging his disgusting tongue into my mouth. I bit down on his tongue and I could taste the blood. He pulled away and punched me in the jaw. I felt a crack as my jaw broke at his assault. His minions let me go and I fell to the ground. I closed my eyes and felt the tears fall down my cheeks. I heard them scuffle and some angry voices. I heaved my battered body off of the ground and looked toward the noise.*

*Jacob's minions were holding a squirming Edward. Jacob looked at me and gave me a sadistic smile. "If you're not going to give me what I want, I'll take what you have away," he sneered. Jacob pulled out a gun from the back of his jeans. Edward was forced onto his knees. His beautiful green eyes caught mine. He mouthed that he loved me. I scrambled to my feet, moving too slowly. Jacob put the gun in between Edward's eyes. He kept looking at me , tears streaming down his face. Jacob cocked the gun and pulled the trigger.*

*Nothing happened.*

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*Edward's body jumped and his eyes moved to Jacob. Jacob laughed an evil laugh and pulled a knife from his boot. He slit Edward's throat and blood spurted out. I screamed and ran to my love. Jacob caught me and I felt the knife slide across my throat. The next thing I knew, blackness claimed me...*

I woke up and I was drenched in sweat. I was still intertwined with Edward. I looked down at his sleeping form. His face, so beautiful, was unconsciously creased with worry. I ran my fingers over his brows, smoothing the worry lines there. His eyes fluttered open and he looked at me thoughtfully. He reached his hand and cupped my face.

"Bella, you're drenched," he said quietly.

"I had a horrible nightmare. It was so real," I sniffled.

"Me, too. I was in a dark room, being held down by two huge guys. Jacob tried to kill me with a gun, but there were no bullets. He then slit my throat and then slit yours," he replied, tears falling down his cheeks.

"That was my nightmare, also. I'm so scared, Edward. I don't know what I would do if anything happened to you. You mean so much to me," I cried. Edward gathered me in his arms and cradled me against his chest.

"I feel the same way, beautiful. *L'amo più della mia propria vita*. I love you more than my own life, Bella," he said as he ran his hand through my tangled hair. "I'm not going to lie. I'm fucking terrified. However, I'll do everything in my power to ensure your safety. You are first and foremost in my mind."

I nodded against his chest, burrowing deeper. I needed to be as close as possible to him. "Try to get some more sleep, beautiful. It'll be hard, but we need our rest. Just know that I'll be here when you wake up and I'll always try to protect you," Edward whispered in my ear.

"I love you, Edward. Thank you for being here tonight," I murmured.



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"I can't imagine anywhere else I want to be," he replied. "I love you so much, my beautiful girl."

Edward quietly hummed the lullaby that he wrote for me and my eyes felt heavy. He held me close to his body and pressed a kiss to my hair. Eventually, a deep and dreamless sleep claimed me.

**A/N: Okay, so all I got out was the lemon and also Edward finally told Bella about his plans for Christmas and his money situation. Up next will be Rosalie and Edward's rehearsal. I want to put that into Edward's point of view. Also, some minor drama with James is coming up as well. Please leave a review. They make me happy :).**

# Dance Lessons

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 33: Dance Lessons

### EPOV

Bella managed to fall back asleep after her nightmare. I couldn't. The thought of losing her was too fresh in my mind, even if it was just a dream. I held her tightly for the rest of the night. Humming her lullaby, not for her but for me as well. If I hummed it, it kept my mind occupied. If my mind was occupied, I couldn't imagine Bella being hurt by the asshat, Jacob. Nothing can ever harm her. I wouldn't survive if it did. I kept humming until my throat hurt, until the room was bathed in a lavender light as the sun rose, until Rose's alarm clock went off. I closed my eyes and buried my nose in Bella's hair as Rose get ready for her work out. She walked past both of us and patted my hand. I opened an eye.

"I know you were up most of the night, Edward," she said sadly.

"I'm sorry if I kept you up, Rosalie," I whispered.

"I really couldn't sleep either. I'm scared for her. I'm scared for you," Rose muttered. "Let's just say this situation that both of you are enduring is reopening some wounds of mine. If either one of you want to talk, please I'm more than willing."

"Thanks, Rose," I said, looking down at my sleeping Bella.

"If you don't want to get together today to learn the dance for our song, I'm

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cool with that," she said with a small smile.

"No, we have to. Felix wants us to dance our duet during rehearsal on Thursday. I need to learn it and become comfortable with it. The more time I get, the better I'll be with this intricate choreography you've cooked up," I said with a sleepy smile.

"Okay, Edward. We'll get lunch and then change into some comfortable clothes and head to the fitness center. Text me if you are too tired," Rose said, squeezing my shoulder.

"I'll probably be exhausted, but it needs to get done."

"See you later," Rose said by the door. She gave a wave and quietly slipped out the door. I looked at the clock and it was only six in the morning. I closed my eyes and held onto my girl. I had a few minutes before my alarm would go off. I needed to be near her for as long as possible.

As soon as my eyes closed, my alarm blared from my pocket of my jeans. Bella groaned and rolled over. She clumsily got up and headed to the bathroom. She turned to me before she entered.

"Thank you, Edward. I love you," she said quietly.

"I love you too, beautiful. I'm going to head up and shower. I'll be back down in a little bit. I'll make sure I have two very large, very caffeinated coffees," I said with a sleepy grin.

"Coffee ain't going to cut it today. I have some energy drinks in my fridge. I'll be chugging one of those in addition to the coffee," she said groggily.

I chuckled and got out of bed. I walked over to Bella. She was leaning against the door frame by the bathroom. I gathered her in a hug and held her to my chest. She melted into my body and heaved a large sigh. I kissed her forehead and reluctantly headed up to my room. I unlocked my door and grabbed my towel from my laundry basket. I also got my clothes for the day. I turned on the

small shower in our room and made it as hot as I could handle. I slowly stripped my clothes from the previous day off of my body. I stepped into the hot spray. I leaned against the wall of the shower, letting the hot water run down my back.

I was not an overly emotional guy. However, as I stood in the shower, my feelings overwhelmed me. I was so terrified about what could possibly happen to Bella. I was so angry at Jacob for continuing to control our lives. I was so sad at what this situation was doing to my beautiful girl. It pained me to see her in so much anguish. I felt hot tears fall down my cheeks. I could feel the sobs gather in my chest. I punched the wall in frustration, fear, pain and sadness. I wished I was able to punch Jacob. He was a hateful, spiteful human being.

I regained control and wiped my cheeks with the back of my hand. I grabbed my body wash and quickly washed the nastiness of last night off of my tired body. I rinsed and grabbed my shampoo. I furiously scrubbed my hair, to the point of pain. I rinsed the shampoo out of my hair and turned off the shower. I put my towel around my waist and walked to the mirror. I wiped the mirror so I could see my reflection. I had a several-day old beard growing on my face and dark circles under my eyes. I ran my hand across my chin and decided not to shave today. I was too tired and didn't want to deal with that shit. I quickly brushed my teeth and put on some deodorant. I headed back into my room and slipped my boxers on under my towel. I also put on a pair of jeans, Doc Martens, a black thermal shirt and my black fleece.

Emmett and Jasper were still in their beds. Jasper was snoring away. Emmett poked his head up when I exited the shower. He gave me a look of concern. "What's up, Cullen? I heard you in the shower."

"I am fucking terrified, Emmett. I'm fucking pissed off. I hate this fucktard, Jacob. I just wish he would go away. I hate what he's doing to Bella," I said sadly.

"I know, man. Believe me, I know. I understand that you feel that it's your personal duty to ensure Bella's safety, but you're not alone. I'm just as terrified and pissed off. This is my *sister* he's fucking with. She's my blood. If anything

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happens to her, there will be hell to pay," Emmett growled.

"Tell me about it. When you plan on making him pay, save me some, okay?" I sneered.

"You got it, bro. Bella is incredibly lucky to have you. I know she loves you immensely. But remember, you're not alone. Neither is she," Emmett said with a smile. "If you ever need to talk, don't hesitate, man. I'm beginning to think of you as a brother and I don't want you to be hesitant to talk to me."

"Thanks, Emmett. I feel the same way," I said reaching my hand out. Emmett grabbed my hand and pulled me into a hug.

*In his bed! I'm scarred for life.*

"Emmett, this is kind of freaking me out," I squeaked into his shoulder.

"Sorry, bro. Didn't mean to make you uncomfortable," he chuckled. "I'll see you later. I know you have an early class. I mean it, though."

"Thanks. I'll talk to you later." I grabbed my messenger bag, wallet and keys and headed down to the cafeteria. I found the largest travel mugs and filled them with coffee. I fixed Bella's and figured I'd just drink my black today. I needed all the help I could get to keep me awake. I walked back to Patterson and lugged my body up to Bella's room. I knocked on her door and she opened up. I laughed when she walked out.

"What?" she asked, confused.

"We match," I snorted.

She looked at what I was wearing and what she had on. She was also wearing a pair of jeans, black shirt and black fleece. Her hair was pulled through a black baseball hat and she had on her glasses. She shook her head and reached for her coffee. I handed it to her and she took a long pull from the cup. Her eyes rolled in the back of her head. She grabbed my hand and led me down the hallway.

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We walked in silence to Brandon Hall, sipping our coffee. We had our theory midterm today. I was not mentally ready for this test. I knew that I would do okay, as would Bella. However, the whole situation with Jacob, the douchetard, was not boding well for my sanity. Bella and I settled in our seats in the back of the room. She took out a pencil and tapped it on her desk. I rummaged through my bag, but couldn't find a writing utensil.

"I'm an idiot. Can I borrow a pencil, baby?" I asked.

She handed me the pencil that she was tapping and pulled out another one from her bag. Bella gave me a smile and rubbed her hand down my cheek. "You're scruffy today, Edward."

"I was too tired this morning. If I attempted to shave, I'd be covered with nicks and scratches. That's not a good look. I'm a bit of 'Grizzly Adams,'" I said running my hand over my chin.

"I like it," she said with a seductive grin. "It reminds me that you are all man."

"I'm your man, beautiful. I love you," I said, leaning in to give her a kiss. I hazily heard a huff and I saw James roll his eyes at Bella and me.

"Larry is not here today so I'm administering your test. Please clear your desks," James said tersely.

Bella and I put our coffee on the ground by our feet and just had our pencils on the desks. James passed out the tests and gave us both an evil glare as walked past us.

*I do not need this today, you clown. Don't fuck with me.*

I looked down at the test and began answering the questions. We had the entire class period to complete the test and when we were done, we were free to go. I finished my test first and turned it in. I waited for Bella outside the classroom until she was done. She came out five minutes later. I held open my arms and she eagerly accepted my embrace. I swayed us back and forth before leading

her down the stairs to The Cage. When we got to The Cage, Emmett was already there. He was on his phone, speaking in hushed tones. He popped up when we got to the table. He handed his phone to Bella. Bella took it apprehensively. She walked over to the windows with Emmett's phone.

"Who were you talking to?" I asked.

"Our dad. He called and said that the police raided Jacob's house. They found Billy's computer with the email but Jacob was nowhere to be found. Billy said that he was visiting his sister, Rebecca, in Hawaii. She is married to some Samoan surfer or some shit like that. There is now a warrant for Jacob's arrest. He violated his probation from his DUI conviction and for violating the restraining order against Bella. However, it's not looking good in regard to finding him," Emmett replied with a grimace.

"Fuck. I hate him. He's such a dog," I growled. I slammed my fist down onto the Formica table. Emmett grabbed my shoulder and looked at me sympathetically.

"You got stay strong, for Bella. She can't see you fall apart. She'll crumble. She's incredibly strong, but very fragile in the same aspect," Emmett said.

I nodded, pinching the bridge of my nose between my fingers. "This is such a clusterfuck, Emmett."

"Tell me about it. I feel so powerless. I can't do anything to protect my Isabelly. I can't do anything to protect you. I hate it," he fumed.

Bella walked back into The Cage. Her cheeks were pink and there were tears rolling down her face. I held open my arms and she sat down in my lap, burrowing her head into the crook of my neck. She sobbed against my chest, clutching my fleece. I wrapped one hand around her waist and the other hand went to the nape of her neck. "Bella, I'm so sorry, baby. I'm so sorry," I said, my voice cracking. "I love you and I wish I could make all of this go away." She cried harder and held onto me tighter. Emmett moved to the seat next to me and rubbed Bella's back. His own eyes glittered with tears. We sat there

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until Bella and I had to head to our next class. I got up before we left and got us some breakfast. Bella needed to eat. I got her a bagel and cream cheese along with another cup of coffee. Emmett held her as I got her food. I put her breakfast into a bag and stuck it in her messenger bag. I pulled Bella off of Emmett's lap and enveloped her into a hug. I kissed the crown of her head. She had calmed down but was still trembling.

"You ready to head to class, beautiful?" I asked gently. She shook her head no. She took a deep breath and picked up her glasses off the table. She had taken them off as she was crying. She slipped on her jacket and slung her bag over her shoulders. Bella bent down and gave Emmett a hug. He returned it, whispering in her ear. He kissed her cheek as she stood up. Bella laced her fingers with mine. I decided to walk her to her education class. I needed to make sure that she was safe. I dropped her off by her classroom. Her eyes were downcast, almost ashamed. I cupped her chin and gently lifted it so she could look at me. "I'm so proud of you, Bella. You are so strong. I love you."

"I'm not strong, Edward. I'm weak and useless. I'm everything Jacob ever told me I was. I'm nothing but his little bitch, worthy of nothing," she mumbled dejectedly, pulling her chin away from my hands. She began to turn and head into class. I snatched her hand and pulled her into the stairwell. She fought me as I moved her to the stairs, so she was eye-level with me.

"That's complete and utter horseshit and you know it, Bella. He's breaking you and he's not even here. You're better than that. You are not weak. You have to be one of the strongest people I know. If this happened to anybody else, they would totally crumble under the pressure. You are definitely not useless. You have completed me in a way that I never thought imaginable. You are intelligent, beautiful, talented and are worthy of everything. You are worthy of happiness. You are worthy of joy. You are worthy of love. Bella, feel this," I said as I grabbed her hand and placed it on my chest, above my heart. "My heart beats for you, and only you."

Bella tried to pull her hand away from my chest, but I held firm. "You are worth so much more than what you give yourself credit for. Jacob is a stupid, deranged, sadistic asshole. In his crazed and delusional mind, he thinks he can



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get you. He can't. Not if you let him. Bella, you're not alone. You'll never be alone. We're all here for you. I'm here for you and I'm never going away. Ever. I love you too much. Please, I can't lose you because of this douche," I cried, as tears flowed down my cheeks. I pressed her hand further against my chest and reached up to caress her cheek. Her own tears were falling down her face. She blinked a few times and looked into my eyes. There was sadness there, but I also saw determination.

"You're right, Edward. I can't let him control me. I'm sorry," she said, pulling her hand away and throwing her arms around my neck. "I love you too. So much. You're my life."

I snaked my arms around her waist and picked her up. Her legs wrapped around my body and she clung to me like a spider monkey. I heard someone clear their throat and Bella released me. I gently placed her back on the stairs. She ducked her head and blushed. I just pulled her back to her classroom, giving our 'friend' a parting glare. I dropped Bella back to her classroom. She gave me a parting kiss and scurried inside. Class was starting in a few minutes. I needed to high-tail it to the science building for my own class. I was emotional spent and physically drained. I wasn't sure how I was going to make it through the day. I reached into my bag and found an energy drink with a note around it.

*I figured you might need this, handsome. I love you. - B*

I opened up the drink and chugged it as I went to the science building. I was only a few minutes late to biochemistry and got a pointed look from my professor. I turned in my lab report to the in-box and settled into my seat. Under the desk, I sent Jasper a quick text.

*Jasper, Bella is having a rough time today. Can you meet her outside her education class? - E*

*Will do, Eddie-boy. Where is she at? I'm really worried about her. - J*

*She's in Facinelli, Room 126 - E*

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*Will be there with bells on! See you later, bro - J*

*Thanks, Jas. I appreciate it. - E*

I slipped my phone into my jacket pocket and focused my attention on my biochemistry lecture. It dragged and I hated it. I only wanted to be with Bella. I wanted to make her happy. I wanted to make her safe. I needed to see her smile. Eric nudged me and pointed to his notebook. He was asking me what was wrong. I just replied with "Too much." He frowned and patted me on the shoulder. I managed to get through biochemistry. Barely. I nodded off a few times. I decided that during my break between biochem and University Singers I would head to my practice room and crash for an hour. The professor dismissed us and I bolted out of my chair. I walked briskly to Brandon and raced up the four flights of stairs to my practice room. I unlocked it, threw my bag on the chair and pulled off my fleece. I rolled it up and used it as a make-shift pillow. I set my alarm on my phone and settled in for a nap.

xx LC xx

I slept through my alarm. I faintly heard banging on the door. I blinked and opened my eyes. I checked my phone and cursed. I opened the door and found Bella outside, looking frantic.

"Are you okay, Edward? You weren't in University Singers and I got worried," she said, tears gathering in her eyes.

"I'm fine, beautiful. I fell asleep and I guess I slept through my alarm," I said pulling my arms around her. She relaxed in my embrace and placed a kiss above my heart.

"Eleazar was worried, too. He wanted to meet with us about our pieces after rehearsal today," she mumbled against my chest.

"Come on, let's go talk with him. I need to apologize for missing class anyway," I said. I gently lifted her face and caressed her lips with mine. I reached into my bag and popped in a piece of gum. We descended the stairs

and knocked on Eleazar's office door.

"Come in," he said pleasantly. Bella opened the door and walked in. I followed her, sheepishly. "Ah, Bella! Edward, I was worried about you. Bella said that you were in theory this morning, but didn't come to choir today."

"I'm sorry, Eleazar. I had a rough night sleeping last night and I wanted to crash of a little bit. I went up to my practice room and took a nap. I guess I slept through my alarm," I said with a frown.

"I'm sorry that you didn't sleep well. Is everything alright? It looks like both of you need a good nights' sleep," Eleazar responded.

Bella and I shared a look. She launched into the story about Jacob and how he was terrorizing our lives. She explained about the most recent occurrence and how he was missing from his home, currently in Hawaii. Eleazar looked pissed. Bella noticed that and stood closer to me.

"Bella, dear. I'm not mad at you. I'm upset at what this asshole is doing to you and to Edward. You have such a kind heart and beautiful soul. You should not have to deal with this," he said patiently. "I'm sorry. I was planning on having you both run rehearsal this Wednesday. However, in light of what's happening, I'm thinking it's not the best course of action. Let's plan for you running rehearsal next Friday, okay?"

"That won't work, Eleazar. Express is going on a tour and we're leaving the Thursday before. Can we shoot for Wednesday?" I asked.

"Ah, yes. I remember Felix sending out that email about Express performing at the Four Seasons Centre. Wednesday it is. Email me your plans of what you want to accomplish by next Monday," Eleazar replied with a smile. "Also, if you need to talk, I'm more than willing."

"Thank you, Eleazar," Bella said with a sad smile. I squeezed Bella's waist and reached to shake Eleazar's hand. He shook it and led us out of his office.

## La Cantante

Bella and I walked silently to the cafeteria to meet with Rose before our dance rehearsal. I was secretly dreading this. I am an okay dancer, but having little, to no sleep, emotional exhausted and physically drained, this rehearsal was going to kick my ass.

We got to the cafeteria and settled in to eat a quick lunch. I hadn't eaten anything from the night before. I was starving. Rose looked at me warily as I inhaled my food. She also nudged Bella. She whispered in her ear. Bella smiled sadly and reached for my hand.

"Edward, you look like shit," Rose said bluntly.

"Um, thanks, Rosalie?" I said, quirked an eyebrow.

"Seriously. You look like something that would crawl out of Emmett's ass. Go back to your room and sleep," she ordered.

"That is a visual that I didn't need to have over lunch. I almost puked up what I just ate," I blanched. "What about the rehearsal? We need to learn your choreography."

"Edward, you'll be useless to me if you're a zombie. You could get hurt. I could get hurt. Felix would kick my ass. Go to room and sleep or fuck or whatever it is you do to relax. We can do the rehearsal after dinner, once you've caught up on your rest," Rosalie barked.

I conceded. I was not about to argue with Rosalie. She was right. If I wasn't paying attention, I could take a misstep and hurt myself or her. I finished my lunch and I went back up to my room with Bella. She slept as poorly as I did and she looked like she needed a nap as well. She took off her fleece and glasses and lay down in my bed. I stripped off my fleece and my shirt and crawled into bed with her. I wrapped my arms around her tiny body and nestled my face into her neck, kissing her lightly. She hummed sleepily. She laced her fingers with mine and we both fell asleep.

xx LC xx

## La Cantante

When Bella and I woke up from our nap, it was dark out. I faintly heard Jasper typing on his computer and Emmett was reading a book. I looked down and Bella was still dead to the world. I kissed her temple and got out of bed. I pulled my shirt back over my head and padded to the bathroom. I took care of business and went back out into the room, sitting on my beanbag chair.

"Did you get some good rest, Edward?" Jasper asked, eyes filled with concern.

"Yeah, I did. Could have used more, though," I said groggily. "My stomach disagrees."

"We're heading down to the cafeteria in a little bit. You and Bella should join us," Jasper replied.

"I'll mention it to her. She needs her rest just as badly as I do."

"Edward, everything is going to be alright. Alice has a feeling," Jasper muttered.

"Alice and her feelings. Psychic little sprite," I chuckled. Bella stirred from my bed and rolled over. She looked over at me sleepily, giving me a small smile. "Hey sleeping beauty."

"Hi, handsome. How long were we out?"

"A little over four hours. I guess we really needed our rest," I said, crossing over to the bed. I sat down on the bed and brushed some hair off her pale features. "How are you feeling?"

"Emotionally drained. Pissed off as hell. Confused."

"All understandable. If you don't want to come to my rehearsal with Rose, I'm certain she'll understand," I said.

"Oh no. That is the one thing I've been looking forward to all day. I want to see you dance your ass off," she giggled.

## La Cantante

"Well, okay then. Let's get some dinner and then watch me dance my ass off. Let me change first," I replied, getting up off the bed. I went to my dresser and pulled out a pair of workout pants and a t-shirt. I also grabbed a pair of running shoes. I went into the bathroom and quickly changed. I walked out and Bella was gone. "Where did she go?"

"She went down to her room to go to the bathroom and change herself. We're meeting the girls at their room," Jasper said as he pushed out of his chair. Emmett closed his book and grabbed his keys. I picked up my keys, wallet and jacket and we headed down to the girls' room.

Rose and Bella were both wearing a pair of yoga pants. Bella had on a green t-shirt and Rose had on a pink tank top. Rose was also carrying a large bag. We all walked out of Patterson and headed to the cafeteria. Dinner was a quiet affair. No one was in the mood to talk. I'm assuming that they were all as exhausted as Bella and me. We finished our dinner and Rose, Bella and I walked to the fitness center. Rose had arranged for us to use one of the small workout rooms with the mirrors. We signed in at the front desk and climbed the stairs to the room.

Rose turned on the lights and dropped her bag onto the floor. She opened it up and pulled out a notebook, iPod sound dock and a pair of jazz shoes. She plugged in the sound dock and put in her iPod. She put on a playlist and began stretching out. Bella joined her.

*Damn. Both of them are so flexible.*

Rose fell into a split, resting on her elbows in front of her. Bella did the same. I just stood there, gaping at both of them like a cod.

"Edward, I would suggest stretching out. You don't want to pull a muscle," Rose said.

"Um, right," I stumbled. I took off my fleece and slipped on my running shoes. I flopped down onto the floor and tried to stretch out. I could see Bella and Rose snickering at me. "What?"

## La Cantante

"You have the flexibility of an old man, Edward. Sheesh," Rose giggled.

"I'm sorry that I'm not as bendy as you two. I'm doing the best that I can here," I grumbled. Rose and Bella shared a look. Bella gracefully got up and sat behind me.

"Spread your legs, Cullen," she commanded. I did so and I felt her hands on my shoulders. "Keep your back straight and lean forward until you feel a pull in your hamstrings." I did as she asked. I only moved about an inch. Bella pressed on my shoulders and moved me some more. I felt the pull, it actually felt good. She helped me with a few more stretches and by the time we were done, I was pretty loose.

I stood up and Rose walked next to me. She did the steps that she created for me a few times. I watched the first time, starting blocking it the second time and joined her the final time. We worked through the whole piece like that. Rose was very cognizant of where we were supposed to sing and made the choreography less intricate at those points. Our duet was very complex, involving a lot of footwork and some lifts. I fumbled a few times, frustrated at my body's lack of cooperation. We were running it a few times, full out with the music. I kept getting caught in this one spot. Rose and I stepped through it until I was comfortable. We decided to perform it one last time before calling it a night.

Bella was running the iPod. She hit the music and Rose and I began our dance. About halfway through the dance, we were supposed to do a leg lift. I was moving pretty well up until that point. I stepped down on my left leg and I felt it collapse underneath me. My knee was throbbing. Bella stopped the music and scrambled over to me.

"Edward! Are you okay? What happened?" she asked, frantically.

"I'm not sure, but my knee gave out. I'm fine. Just give me a minute," I whimpered. I sat up and gingerly touched my left leg. I rolled up my pants and saw that it was a little swollen. "Can you help me up?"

## La Cantante

Rose and Bella grabbed both of my hands and heaved me off the ground. I stood on my right leg and cautiously put my left leg down. I balanced my weight between the two. It was a bit weak, but I don't think I did any permanent damage. I took a few hesitant steps around the studio. I had a slight limp but I was able to weight on it. Rose rummaged through her bag and pulled out a knee brace. She tossed it to me and told me to put it on. I slipped off my shoe and put the brace on under my pants. It helped tremendously. After about fifteen minutes, we packed up and headed back to Patterson. Rose told me that she did something similar when she was on dance team. I needed to take it easy, ice and elevate. She also told me to keep the knee brace and wear it on Thursday. I nodded in assent.

After our two hour rehearsal, I was exhausted. Bella helped me up to my room. She gave me a kiss and pushed me into bed. She swiped an icepack from Emmett's fridge and put it on my knee. She said that she was going to sleep in her room tonight but would see me tomorrow morning. As soon as she left, I felt my eyes get heavy and I fell asleep. Thankfully, there were no nightmares tonight.

xx LC xx

Tuesday sucked. My knee was swollen and it hurt like a mother. I called Carlisle and he told me that I probably sprained it. He reiterated what Rosalie mentioned and told me to take it easy. I also had a horrible day in biochemistry. Eric was gone and I was stuck doing the lab by myself. Thankfully, I didn't blow anything up. The only positive was Bella and I got to spend some time in her room alone. Emmett and Rose went out a date and Jasper and Alice had a seminar to go to. We spent the evening just kissing and cuddling with each other. Bella was still very upset over what happened over the weekend and I didn't want to injure my knee.

Wednesday also turned out to be interesting as well. I woke up and headed down to Bella's room, like usual. We walked to Brandon and got into our theory room, as usual. Larry and James walked in. Larry gave Bella and I a disapproving look and James just smiled smugly. Larry said that he had the tests graded but couldn't hand them back due a compromising situation. He



## La Cantante

began the lecture and introduced some new material. At the end of class, Larry asked both Bella and I to stay after. Bella's face paled and my stomach dropped to my toes.

"Can you both come with me to my office?" Larry asked, seriously. We gathered our things and walked down the hallway to Larry's office. He opened the door and ushered us inside. James followed and Larry closed the door. "I'm certain you're both curious as to why I called you in here."

Bella and I nodded.

"James informed me that on Monday, during the midterm, he saw both of you cheating off of each other's paper," Larry said with a frown. "I want to hear the story from you."

"That's a total lie, Dr. Meyers," Bella said. "Edward and I would never cheat off each other."

"She's lying, Larry. I saw her look at Mr. Cullen's paper. She had several answers that were exactly the same!" James roared.

"James, I listened to you yesterday. Now, I want to listen to what they have to say. Be quiet," he said tersely.

"Bella and I would never do such a thing. It is extremely hurtful to have our integrity questioned like this," I seethed.

"Well, to uphold your integrity and mine, would you be willing to take another exam, in separate rooms? It'll be the same information, but a different format of the test?" Larry suggested.

I saw red. "I'm sorry, but that's just not feasible. It's not right for us to have to take a different test because we've accused of cheating. Are our scores even the same?"

## La Cantante

"Bella did far better than you did, Edward. She got a 96% and you got an 85%. If you retake the tests, I'll give you the higher of the two scores," Larry bargained.

"If we do worse, will you keep the higher of the two scores?" Bella questioned.

"Yes. James, would you mind going into the files and pulling two tests for me. I want to make sure that they are cover the same things?" Larry asked. James huffed and stomped out of the room. As soon as the door shut, Larry leaned forward on his chair. "I'm not sure what his deal is, but I don't believe him. James has had it out for the two of you since the beginning of the semester. I'm working with Dean Aro Volturi to get him out of here. However, I don't have concrete evidence."

"I'll retake the test, Larry," Bella said quietly. "I know the material."

"I'll do the retake as well. However, I'm not happy about it. If it improves my score, then we'll see," I snapped.

"Okay. Bella, you stay in here to take your test. Edward, I'm going to put you in James' office. He's going for coffee," Larry said pointedly. James returned with two tests and handed them to Larry. He quickly looked them over and gave them to us. Bella went into Larry's office and I sat down in James' office. I heard Larry and James arguing in the hallway but focused my attention on my test. I finished it in a half an hour and gave it to Larry, who was in our theory classroom. Bella walked out as I turned my test in. Larry graded the tests in front of us. I had significantly improved my score, getting a 97% and Bella received a 100%. Larry apologized profusely over the confusion and vowed that he would not take James' word over ours again.

After our test debacle, I walked Bella to her education class. I gave her a hug and searing kiss before walking as quickly as I could to biochemistry. Hopefully the week would improve as it continued. If stayed on the same path as it has been, I don't know if I could take it.

**A/N: What do you think? Good? Bad? Indifferent? If so, leave a review.**

# Traveling to Toronto

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 34: Traveling to Toronto

### BPOV

Something has got to give. First, there's the situation with Jacob. Ugh. Then, the problem with Seth and his photography issues. Finally, James and his accusations of cheating. I'm seriously. What. The. Fuck? Does God have a personal vendetta towards me? Does he want me to be permanently pissed off? All of this is fucking with my life. Fucking with my relationships with my roommates, my brother and most importantly my boyfriend. He's sullen and scared. I'm terrified of my own shadow and exhausted. Something has got to give. If not, it's going to rip us all to shreds.

I'm secretly looking forward to the trip to Toronto with Emerson Express. I need time away from all of the drama. Edward needs time away from all of the drama. We just need time to be with each other. Even if it's for a few hours on a bus, then I'll take it. Edward is in hyper-vigilant protective mode. He refuses to let go anywhere alone. I understand and appreciate his concern, but I do need space. This trip for a few days will do that. At least I hope so.

After Emerson Express rehearsal on Thursday, Edward, Rosalie and I went to a pizza joint to kick back. Mike Newton, Ben Cheney and Jessica Stanley joined us as well. It felt nice to relax with some friends. We ordered deep dish pizza and filled ourselves to the gills with the deliciousness that is pizza. We discussed our upcoming trip to Toronto. We were leaving after a brief rehearsal on the following Thursday. I told Edward that I would pack his bags for him, as he was in class up until rehearsal. He was extraordinarily grateful. Edward

## La Cantante

was rooming with Ben and I was rooming with Rosalie. Rose said that she didn't mind if Edward slept in our room. I gave her a huge hug as she knew how reliant I was of Edward.

While we were in Toronto, we were going to spend Friday doing touristy things. On Friday evening, we would have a rehearsal for our performance on Saturday. It was a rehearsal on the stage of the Four Seasons Centre in downtown Toronto. We would be able to do a sound check and arrange our risers where we would like them. Our performance on Saturday was in the morning. We would be critiqued and scored. Based on the scores, we could go onto the semi-finals of the competition, which were in the evening. The finals, if we made it that far, were early in the afternoon on Sunday. We would leave the competition after the final performances and get back to Emerson late in the evening on Sunday night.

After our pizza excursion, Rose and I went back to our room. Edward said that he needed to study for a biochemistry test that he had tomorrow. He gave me a kiss and went up to his room. Rose, Alice and I spent the rest of the evening just having girl talk.

"How are things going with Jasper, Alice?" I said as I took a sip of my Diet Dr. Pepper.

"Oh, Bella. He's wonderful. He totally gets me. He's sweet, kind, gentlemanly and awesome in bed. He does this one thing..."

"Alice! I don't want to know about your bedroom Olympics," I snapped.

"Oh, come on! That's what's the most fun about girl talk. Sharing your sexcapades and comparing notes," she giggled.

"Christ! I have NEVER done that before. Why would I start now?" I snorted.

"Because, you could learn something new and exciting," piped up Rose. "There's got to be one thing that Edward does that makes your hair curl."

## La Cantante

"He does more than just ONE thing, Rosalie," I giggled.

"So spill 'em, Swan," Alice snickered.

"This is your BROTHER! B-R-O-T-H-E-R! Won't you find that a bit weird?"

"Nope. We're not related by blood so, zero weirdness," Alice said, plopping down on my bed. "I'll share one thing that Jasper does and then you can do the same about Edward. How about that?"

"I don't know, Ali," I said uncertainly.

"Anyhow, I've never thought I'd be one for oral sex. I personally found it to be disgusting. Both giving and receiving. Since I've starting dating Jasper, he's convinced of the wonders that is oral sex. My favorite position is actually 69. So much orgasmic fun," Alice said with a dreamy look in her eyes.

"I'll go next," Rose beamed.

"What?" I squeaked.

"Emmett and I haven't done much but we've done some things. As you both know, Emmett is the first guy that I've felt anything for since my attack. He's sweet and kind. On our last date, he took me La Bella Italia. He arranged it with the restaurant for us to have the back dining room, where we had your birthday. He had rose petals spread all over the table and a dozen red roses in the room. Anyhow, he ordered all of my favorite foods and fed them to me. At the end of the night, we had our most heated kiss yet. I think I'm falling in love with him. I never thought I could allow myself to trust another man so quickly after my attack. Yet, Emmett breezes into my life and makes me feel like a princess," Rosalie gushed.

"Awww, that's so sweet, Rose. Emmett sounds like perfect guy for you," Alice squealed. They both turned and glared at me.

## La Cantante

"Oh, jeez. Okay, here goes. This happened before we ever had sex. This does not leave this room. Got it?"

They both nodded and sat forward on their beds.

"The weekend after the first package was sent to me from Jacob, I was supposed to work with Garrett. I had a minor meltdown in the car on the way there. I called Garrett and we managed to work it out so I didn't have to come that week. Anyhow, Edward and I went to pick up some food for the weekend at the grocery store. I cooked this awesome meal and we watch a movie. *Shawshank Redemption*, which is one of my favorite movies. After the movie, Edward gives me shit for being sleepy. We had taken a nap earlier that day. He scoops me up over his shoulder and carries me up to his room. I attack his sides with my fingers and puts me down. He runs into his bedroom and I follow him. I walk into the bedroom and I don't see him. I hear the door shut and he puts a blindfold over my eyes. He then proceeds to tell me what to do and it is so fucking hot. I couldn't touch him. He tied my hands up above my head. He then gave me the most earth-shattering orgasm that I ever had from going down on me. Everything was heightened because I couldn't see and his voice was pure sex. I'm actually getting a little wet remembering it," I said, blush creeping over my cheeks

"Holy shit. My brother, the dom," Alice breathed.

"That's fucking hot. I will never look at Edward in the same light. He's so easy-going and nice. He doesn't appear to have a dominant bone in his body. Well, in that way, I mean."

"You also said that you couldn't picture Edward with a tattoo and he's got one. A big one," I giggled.

"True. Okay, so girls, how do your guys stack up, size-wise?" Rose laughed.

"Jasper is fucking huge. I want to say about 7 inches and pretty wide," Alice confirmed.

## La Cantante

"Okay, Bella, how big is Edward's baloney pony?"

"Rosalie Lillian Hale! That is foul!" I admonished.

"What? I want to know. Alice shared. It's only fair that you do too!"

"Ugh, fine. My guess is about eight inches and there is no doubt that I satisfied by his girth," I said, looking at my fingers. I held up my hands to show his girth and length. Rose's jaw dropped to her chest and Alice squeaked.

"Damn, Edward is HUNG! You are one lucky bitch, Bella," Rose said giving me a high five.

"That I am, Rosalie. That I am."

xx LC xx

The rest of the week and the weekend went by pretty quickly. It was low key. Breaking Midnight had a rehearsal on Sunday evening. We were going to perform at The Chapel on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving break. We needed to choose the songs that we wanted to sing and practice them. On Monday, Edward and I were called into Dean Aro Volturi's office regarding the incident with James Loftin. We were nervous as it was going to the Dean of Academics and Discipline. Larry informed us that he was not pleased with James' work and this cheating accusation finally put the last nail in his coffin. We were told to go to the Dean's office after University Singers.

We walked into Old Main, where the Dean's office was located. We went up to the third floor to meet with Dean Volturi, who happened to be President Volturi's brother.

*Nepotism much?*

We met with Dean Volturi's secretary, Gianna and she told us to have a seat. The dean would see us in a few moments. We hear yelling in the office and the door flew open. James walked out of the office, his face was bright red and his

## La Cantante

hair disheveled. He glared at both Edward and I as he left the office. Gianna gave us a sympathetic look and told us to go inside.

We walked into a large office that had dark wood paneling on the walls and a large brown leather sofa in the corner. By the window, there was a huge marble desk, where a small man was sitting at. He was about 5'6" with short black hair. He had a full beard and very dark eyes. His gaze shifted to where Edward and I were standing and we walked in.

"Hello, Ms. Swan and Mr. Cullen. Please sit down," Dean Volturi said with a smile. "Would like something to drink? Some water or tea?"

"No, thank you," we both answered.

"So, the reason why you are here is the cheating accusation brought forth by Mr. Loftin, Dr. Meyer's teaching assistant. Just to let you know, you are not being charged with any wrong-doing. I am just gathering information regarding Mr. Loftin's conduct in the class and toward you in particular," Dean Volturi clarified. "Can you tell me about Mr. Loftin? How is his teaching style?"

Edward and I shared a look. Edward nudged me to answer. "It's not very good, Dean Volturi."

"Please, call me Aro," he said pleasantly.

"As a teacher, he is not very focused. He gets easily flustered if a student doesn't understand a concept. Almost to the point of anger. He doesn't explain things clearly and gets frustrated if we ask for clarification. The few times he's led the lecture, the students are more confused about the subject matter than when we began. Dr. Meyers has had to reteach almost all of the lessons that James presented. Also, he has a tendency to stare at the female students in class. I've been subject to his gaze and it's a bit unsettling. It almost looks like he's undressing me with his eyes," I mumble.

"Mr. Cullen, what is your assessment of Mr. Loftin as a teaching assistant," Aro asked as he scribbled down some notes.



## La Cantante

"He's short with his temper. He doesn't explain things at all. If you do have a question, he makes you feel guilty for asking it. He's rude and unprofessional," Edward said with a shudder.

"Okay, now to this cheating accusation. Can you tell me what happened on the day the accusation was made?" Aro questioned.

"We showed up for the test. I didn't have a pencil and I asked if I could borrow one from Bella," Edward began.

"That would be you, Ms. Swan? Am I correct?"

"Yes, sir."

"We took the test and I finished first. I waited for Bella outside of the lecture hall until she was done with her test. She came out a few minutes later. When then headed to The Cage for some breakfast," Edward explained.

"Is that an accurate account, Ms. Swan? Bella?"

"Yes, sir. I do want to add that as I was finishing my test, James was staring at me the entire time. He had a sneer on his face and he ripped the test out of my hands when I turned it in."

"Okay. Now, what happened on Wednesday? The day you were supposed to get your tests back?"

"Dr. Meyers said that he had the tests graded but couldn't return them due to extenuating circumstances. At the end of class, he asked Edward and I to come to his office. It was at that point that the cheating accusations were brought forth by James. Edward and I denied it, vehemently. We would never cheat off each other. I made me so angry that our integrity was questioned."

"Dr. Meyers said that he wanted us to retake the test. I was opposed to it, but relented. I retook the test, as did Bella. We took them in separate rooms. We did and our scores improved. Dr. Meyers adjusted our scores accordingly,"

## La Cantante

Edward said quietly.

"Is there anything else that either one of you want to add?" Aro asked.

"It's not related to the class, but about a month ago, I ran into James in Brandon Hall as I was heading to a rehearsal. He was a bit overly 'touchy.' I fell and he was trying to assist me in getting up and he wouldn't keep his hands off of me. He also looked me over like I was something to eat," I murmured.

"Alright. I think that's everything. If there is anything else, I'll call you. Thank you for coming in today. I hope things work out," Aro said as he reached across his desk. He shook Edward's hand and then mine. We got up from the chairs and exited Aro's opulent office. We walked to the elevator and waited for it. We got in and headed down to the main floor.

"What do you think is going to happen, Edward?" I asked as I entwined my fingers with his.

"I don't know, beautiful. I hope they fire his ass. He's creepy," he replied, kissing my knuckles.

"I can't wait until Thursday. I need some time away from campus," I mumbled.

"I hear you, baby. Let's get some lunch and then forget our troubles for the afternoon," Edward said with a suggestive waggle of his brows.

"How will we forget our troubles, Edward?" I asked, already knowing the answer.

He leaned forward and nibbled my ear, licking the shell of my ear. "I can think of a few ways, beautiful. All of them include my fingers, tongue and cock. You game?"

"Oh, yeah, baby!"

Suffice it to say, we didn't go to lunch. We feasted off each other.

xx LC xx

On Wednesday evening, I was in Edward's room. I was helping him pack for our trip to Toronto. He had a garment bag that held his tuxedo along with my and Rose's dress. We needed to be professional and represent Emerson while we were at the competition. On his bed, a small carryon was open. I was neatly folding several pairs of pants as I sat on the bed. Edward was by his closet, running his hand through his bronze hair. He was stressing over what to bring.

"I don't know, Bella. Help!" he whined.

I finished folding the black khakis and put them into the bag. I walked over to his closet and wrapped my arms around his waist. I plucked some sweaters, a couple of button downs and walked to his dresser, picking up some white, grey and black undershirts. I quirked a brow and began folding. He crossed his arms over his chest and glared at me.

"Sometimes you're worse than Alice," I teased.

"Am not," he said petulantly.

I finished folding and grabbed a pair of flannel pajamas and an Emerson shirt. I also picked up a few pairs of boxers and socks, tossing them into the bag. I also picked up his Emerson Express shirt and put it in the bag as well. "You're all good. You just need to put in your toiletries tomorrow morning and you are all ready to go."

"What would I do without you?" he said with a smile.

"Um, still be standing in front of your closet, obsessing over what shirts to bring?" I giggled.

"You're funny, Swan. Fucking hysterical. For that, your dress is out of my garment bag," he said walking to the bag and unzipping it. I started picking up the clothes in his other bag and throwing them on the floor. "Oh come on, Bella. I was kidding!"

## La Cantante

"Uh huh, sure. I have go pack myself. I'll be down in my room. You can come down when you pick up your mess," I said as I ruffled his hair.

"Meanie."

"All you need to do is fold and put them back into your bag. Five minutes, tops, baby," I giggled as I slipped out his room.

"MEANIE!"

Edward came down about fifteen minutes later. I was fully packed except for my toiletries and my poofing supplies. Rose said that she would help when it came to getting ready for the performance. I was grateful for that. According to Alice, I looked like a five dollar whore the last time I performed. I smacked her arm saying I didn't look like a whore. I asked Rose and she agreed. I threw up my arms in frustration.

*Whatever.*

Edward skulked into the room and plopped down on the bed, next to my packed bag. I watched as Edward unceremoniously dumped my entire bag onto the floor. He had a smug smile over his handsome face. I glared at him, my hands on my hips.

Rose was in the room. "Ooooooooooooooh, Edward, you are so in TROOOOOOOOOOUBLE," she teased.

Edward continued to smile at me, pulling his long legs onto my bed. I turned on my heel and ran up to his room. I went into Emmett's underwear drawer and pulled out several pairs of briefs. I took out all of Edward's boxers and replaced them with Emmett's briefs. I crammed the boxers into a pocket in the garment bag. I calmly walked back to my room and found Edward repacking my bag. He looked at me with a contrite look on his face. It was my turn to be smug. I smiled at him and went into the bathroom to shower. He followed me into the shower room.

## La Cantante

"What did you do, Bella?" he asked nervously.

"You'll just have wait and see, Edward. I'd like to shower now," I said as I pushed him by his shoulder out of the bathroom. His face a combination of shock and fear. As soon as he was out of the bathroom, I let out a guffaw and proceeded to hop into the shower.

xx LC xx

I don't think Edward figured out my prank. He'll shit a brick when he sees what I packed for him. I texted Emmett what I had done and he said that he taught me well, young padawan. Taught me well, he did.

*Thank you, Yoda.*

We got through the day on Thursday. Edward was still trying to figure out what I did to his bag. I just giggled at his cluelessness. After U.S. History, I headed back to Patterson and put together finishing touches on our bags. I made sure that Edward's toiletry bag was in his suitcase and that he didn't remove the briefs. He didn't. It looked like it did when I repacked it. I also checked to make sure that the boxers were in the pocket in the garment bag. I grabbed Edward's bags and lugged them downstairs. I added my toiletries and poofing items into my suitcase. Rose and I headed up to Brandon Hall at 4:30, carrying our huge amount of luggage. I also brought my messenger bag and a pillow.

When we arrived at Brandon, there was a huge coach bus in the front of the building. A few of the guys, "the luggage monkeys" were loading up the cargo hold of the bus. Ben took our bags and loaded them for us. I got onto the bus and dropped my messenger bag in a seat near the back of the bus for Edward and I. Rose dropped her bag across the row from my stuff and we headed into the auditorium. We sat down in the seats and waited for the rest of the group to show up. Edward breezed in a few minutes before five. He looked a bit disheveled. I walked up to him and gave him a hug.

"Are you okay, Edward?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"Yeah. I'm just a bit stressed. I'm missing a test in biochem and my professor is being a dick about it. I met with him just now and he said that I can take the test on Monday, but I'd lose ten percent of my grade for doing it 'late.' I told him about this trip as soon as we found out. He said that it wasn't a big deal for me to make it up at a later date. Now, he's completely changing what he said earlier."

"Sorry, Edward. That sucks. Will it affect your grade?" Rose asked.

"I'm pulling a solid A in the class. I can get as low as a C and my grade won't be lowered. However, I am still pissed that he's going back on his word," he grumbled. "Did you get everything we needed?"

"Yes, Edward. Your bag is packed and I gave it to the luggage monkeys. I also included your cell phone charger and iPod in my messenger bag which is on the bus. We're near the back," I said kissing his nose.

"Thank you for doing that for me, beautiful. I love you," he said as he ran his fingers down my hair.

"I love you too."

"I'm really looking forward to this trip. The situation with biochemistry sucks, but we need a vacation. Sort of," he laughed. He pulled me to his body and gave me a kiss.

Felix walked in with another man. He was just as tall as Felix, but with a dark ponytail and had a dark complexion. They were walking hand in hand.

"Greetings Express! Are we excited to go to Toronto?"

A few people responded affirmatively.

"That is just pitiful. Let's try it again. Are we excited to go to Toronto?" Felix repeated.

We all gave a resounding yes.

## La Cantante

"Much better. For those of you who don't know, this handsome young man is my partner, Demetri. He's coming with us to Toronto. He'll also be helping you ladies become beautiful. He's a fantastic make-up artist and hairdresser. I just want to remind you that you are representing Emerson University. Your behavior reflects the school. Please act accordingly. However, you all are fantastic and I don't need to worry about you. We're going to head out about 5:30. We're probably not going to rehearse tonight. I want to make sure that instruments get into the bus unharmed.

"It'll be about a three and half, four hour drive to Toronto. We'll be stopping about halfway for dinner. We'll check into the hotel, the Toronto Hilton, and the rest of the evening is yours. Friday you will have to go exploring. You will need to be back at the hotel by no later than 6. We are heading to the Four Seasons Centre by then for our rehearsal. After our rehearsal, we're heading to dinner as a group.

"Our performance time on Saturday will be at 9:30. You will need to be ready to go by 9:00. Please bring a change of clothes to the performance, as I do not want you in your costumes in between performances. Our subsequent times for our performances in the Semi-finals and Finals will be determined if we make it. We are staying throughout the entire competition, even if we do not advance. I want you guys to watch the other groups. Tyler is coming around with a sheet of paper with my contact information and Demetri's contact information. If there is an emergency, please call us. Any questions? No? Fabulous! As we head up to Toronto, we are watching the first season of *Glee*. There better not be any complaints. Comprendre?"

We all loaded up on the bus and settled into our seats. I sat by the window seat and Edward was on the aisle. He threw his messenger bag into the overhead bin. I pulled my iPod and handed my bag to him to put up there as well. The luggage was loaded, as was the instruments and our risers. Felix did a final check and determined us okay to go. He and Demetri came onto the bus and we pulled away from Brandon Hall. Edward laced his fingers with mine. I put in an ear bud and handed one to Edward. I laid my head on his shoulder and I closed my eyes. He pressed a kiss to my forehead and laid his head on top of mine. We both conked out in minutes.

## La Cantante

About two hours later, I felt the bus come to a stop. I blinked and looked around. We were at an Old Country Buffet. I nudged Edward in the ribs. He yawned and stretched his long limbs. Felix's voice came over the intercom saying that we were getting dinner. We all got up and headed into the restaurant. Felix used the school's credit card to purchase our meals. Edward, Rose, Tyler, Ben and I sat down in booth. The guys got up and got their food. Rose and I went when they came back. Ben and Tyler were having a deep philosophical debate over which buffet was better, Old Country Buffet or Golden Corral. Ben believed it to be Golden Corral. Tyler was adamant that it was Old Country Buffet. They both gave clear arguments. They asked us our opinions. Rose said Golden Corral. Edward said Old Country Buffet. I said neither. This was my first excursion to Old Country Buffet and I had never been to a Golden Corral. Both Tyler and Ben looked at me like I had three heads. They vowed to take me to Golden Corral to provide the deciding vote.

After filling ourselves with food and a ton of dessert, we loaded back on the bus. Edward was rubbing his stomach, like a pregnant woman rubbed her baby belly.

"I'm so full. I ate too much food," he groaned.

"You channeled your inner-Emmett," I giggled. "I'm impressed, Cullen."

"My six pack is going to be a keg," he said, patting his belly.

"Not with one meal, Edward. You will still have your awesome six pack," I said, poking him in the stomach.

"Oh, don't do that, Bella. I'll puke on you," he moaned.

"Um, ew. If you got to puke, the bathroom's that way," I said, pointing to the back of the bus.

"Thanks baby. Would you hold my hair back?" he said with a pout.

"Sure, Edward."



## La Cantante

"You're too good to me, baby. I love you," he said sleepily.

"I love you too, Edward."

Edward laid his head onto my lap and he fell asleep quickly. I idly played with his silky hair as we traveled along the highway to the hotel. I watched the television on the bus, not really paying attention to *Glee*. The rest of the trip was uneventful. Edward was snoring quietly on my lap, his legs stretched out into the aisle. Rose and I chatted about some of our classes. I told her what happened with James and our meeting with Aro. She agreed with Edward and I that James just needed to go away. She told me about her budding relationship with Emmett. Before we knew it, we were pulling up to a sleek hotel in downtown Toronto. The luggage monkeys got out of the bus and began unloading our stuff. I gently scratched Edward's scalp and coaxed him awake. He opened his eyes and got up from his seat. He managed to bump his head on the ceiling and cursed at it. He scowled as he exited the bus, carrying both his and my messenger bag. I got my pillow and followed him.

We walked into the hotel and Felix handed us our keys. He said that he didn't care what we did with the rooming assignments. Only thing he asked was to not trash the rooms. We gathered our luggage and headed up to our rooms. Seeing as Felix was so flexible with the rooms, Edward decided he wouldn't even put his bags with Ben. Tyler decided to room with Ben as he found Mike Newton to be incredibly annoying and Jessica was going to be in there anyway. Once we got settled, Tyler and Ben decided to go to a liquor store and pick up some beers and items for mixed drinks. We weren't going to drink tonight but wanted to have provisions for tomorrow.

Rosalie unpacked her clothes and decided to hop into the shower. I did the same with my clothes. I also wanted to hang up our dresses and Edward's tux. Edward went to his suitcase and opened it up.

"Oh, hell no," he griped.

"What's wrong, Edward?" I asked innocently, trying my hardest not to laugh.

## La Cantante

"This. This is what's wrong," he said picking up a pair of briefs. "These are soooooooooooooo not mine. You wouldn't know about this, would you?"

"I have no idea what you're talking about," I said, batting my eyelashes.

"You suck at lying, Bella. You so know what this is all about," he said. "These aren't even MY underwear."

"Are you sure, Edward?"

"Positive. I don't even own briefs. I'd rather go commando. These look like Emmett's."

"Heh, maybe your underwear got mixed up with his when went to your place a couple weeks ago," I surmised.

"Bella, YOU washed my underwear. It sure as hell did not get mixed up. If anything, I'd be finding thongs and your lacy boy shorts, not Emmett's briefs," he said, his face getting red. "Where are my underwear?"

I shrugged, turning my attention back to my own clothes. I bit my knuckle to fight back the laughter welling up in my body.

"Bella. I know you know something. I'm certain of it. Spill it, Swan," he said, stalking toward me.

"Make me, Edward," I giggled. I turned to face him and put my arms on my hips. He launched at me, throwing me on the bed. His fingers attacked my sides and I shrieked. I began kicking my legs and squirming under his hands.

Rose poked her head out of the bathroom. "Are you killing her, Edward?"

"Not killing. Tickle torture. This evil creature stole my underwear and won't tell me where she put them," he laughed.

## La Cantante

"Who said she brought them?" Rose giggled and closed the bathroom door. Edward stood and turned his body to face the bathroom, his face registering his shock. I took the opportunity and hopped onto his back. I began attacking his sides with my fingers. He squirmed and wiggled.

"Bella! Stop, please!"

I tickled him a few more times and hopped off his back. I walked over to the garment bag and opened the pocket with his boxers. I pulled them out and tossed them to him. His eyes narrowed and I gave him a satisfied smirk.

"You are evil, woman," he said, throwing the boxers into a drawer.

"I'm not evil. I'm calculating. However, you love me. I keep you on your toes," I said, poking him in the chest.

"I do love you and I like it when you keep me on my toes," Edward laughed. He walked back to his suitcase and finished unpacking. I quickly changed into my pajamas and lay down on our bed. Edward also changed into his pajamas and joined me. Rose walked out of the bathroom, dressed in her pjs. I hopped up and scampered to the bathroom. I took out my contacts and put on my glasses. I also washed my face and brushed my teeth. Edward joined me and did the same. When we got out of the bathroom, Rose was curled up in her bed, her back to us. Edward turned off the bathroom light and we crawled into the hotel bed.

Edward pulled me to his chest and peppered my face with kisses. He knew that we couldn't do much, but we did manage to sneak in a pretty heated make out session. By the time we went to sleep, we were both sexually frustrated and sated at the same time. He slipped off his shirt and I cuddled against his chest.

"I love you, Bella. Sleep well, beautiful girl."

"I love you, Edward." I pressed a kiss to his chest.

## La Cantante

We both feel asleep quickly. Tomorrow would be a lot of fun as we had the opportunity to explore Toronto.

**A/N: Thank you so much for reading my story. I hope you are enjoying it. I'm having a lot of fun writing it. Please review if you want. Reviews are like crack and I need a fix. Coming up next, some citrusy fun, exploring Toronto and the show choir competition.**

# Toronto Express

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 35: Toronto Express

### EPOV

Bella was so slick in her prank. I knew that she was up to something when she bolted out of her room when I dumped her suitcase. Rose ripped me a new one after she left and I began repacking her bag. Little did I know what she was doing? She put briefs, **BRIEFS**, into my suitcase. To make it even worse, they weren't even my briefs. They were Emmett's. Ewwwwwwwwwwww! Emmett is a nice guy but the sounds that come from his body indicate not the cleanest set of 'drawers.' She definitely freaked me out. I was ready to go to a 24 hour store to pick up new underwear until she uncovered my boxers in the garment bag.

*Thank the LORD! There's no way I'm going commando all weekend long.*

After our debacle over my boxers, Bella and I headed to bed. It was so nice to be away from Emerson and drama that had taken hold there. It was nice to be in a bed that was not twin-sized. I'm 6'2" and I struggle with sleeping in those beds, even if they are 'extra long.' Add another person, even a small person, it's a tight squeeze. It was nice to be with my girl doing something fun and something we both enjoy.

Bella and I got the best night's sleep ever. We were able to spread out over the queen-sized bed and truly get comfortable. I know that I didn't have any nightmares. I'm assuming Bella had at least one, as she gripped my torso very tightly during the night. I could feel her tears on my chest. I woke up and hummed her lullaby until she settled down, though she never woke up. I faintly

## La Cantante

heard Rose's alarm go off in the morning. Rose was shuffling around the room. I'm assumed she was going to work out. She scribbled a note and placed on the bedside table to my right. I feigned sleep until I heard her grab her bag and leave the room. I picked up the note and read it in the dim light of our hotel room.

*Dear Bella and Edward,*

*I'm going to work out for a few hours. I've been slacking lately. Use the empty room wisely. Despite your covert activities last night, I could still hear you both sucking face. You need some 'alone-time.'*

*I love you both. Enjoy your sexytime. I'll be back by 10.*

*Rose*

*AKA The Sex Fairy :)*

It was official. I loved Rosalie Hale. She was the best choir tour roommate. Ever. In the history of the planet. I could kiss her, but that would be just weird.

I put the note back on the bedside table and pulled down the covers from our bodies. Bella's nipples puckered at the sudden change in the temperature and poked through her t-shirt.

*Nice. I'm such a perv.*

I quietly moved my body over hers and began pressing kisses to her neck. I kissed down her clothed body and she hummed sleepily. I looked at my beautiful girl and she was still sleeping. Her arms were askew above her head, raising her shirt to show a sliver of her taut belly. I raised the shirt and licked across her stomach. Her hips rolled at my tongue. I took the opportunity to pull down her pajama pants. I removed her pants and tossed them onto the floor. I kissed up her long legs, nibbling and sucking along her soft skin. She moaned as I continued my kisses. I smiled against her skin at her sounds. They went straight to my quickly hardening cock.

## La Cantante

I moved my body to hover over Bella's. I brushed many soft kisses along her jaw, the curve of her neck, the tip of her nose and ending with her pillow soft lips. She jumped slightly as I caressed her lips with mine. Her chocolate-colored eyes shot open and bore into my emerald green ones. She gently pushed against my chest and forced me to pull away.

"Edward! Rosalie is in the next bed," she hissed.

I shook my head slowly and reached for the note. I handed it to her and she quickly read it. A wide smile spread over her features and she pulled me back to her body, quite roughly. Her hand reached up the nape of my neck and the other to my ass. She spread her legs and pulled me down to pin her tiny body. I groaned as I felt her heat rub against my cock. I crashed my lips against hers and fisted her long brown hair. Her hands moved up to my bed head and she tugged lightly on my tresses. My hand traveled down her body and I slipped them under her t-shirt. I moved my hand to her perfect breast and gently palmed it. She arched her back and moaned. I pinched the nipple and lifted her shirt with my other hand. She pushed me up to a kneeling position and tore the shirt from her body. She looked feral in the hotel bed. Her hair was wild, her eyes were burning with desire and I could smell how turned on she was. I forcefully pushed her back onto the bed and pulled her leg over my hip. I ground my cock into her fabric-covered core. She moaned.

I released her leg and moved down her body. I hooked my thumbs in her panties and pulled them down her legs. Bella lifted her hips as I pulled them down. I spread her legs and ran my tongue over her clit. Her body arched and her hands shot to my hair.

"You're so wet, beautiful. So ready," I purred.

"Only for you, Edward," she gasped. "Please, I need you."

"Not yet. I want to eat my breakfast," I smiled against her skin. She groaned and tugged on my hair, pushing my face in between her legs. With one of my hands, I spread her smooth, wet skin and flicked her clit. I ran my other finger along her wet folds. She was so wet. It glistened on her thighs. My cock was

getting harder at her arousal. I swirled my tongue and pressed two fingers into her body. I pumped my hand into her wet heat and she was riding my fingers, grinding against my face. I moved my tongue to her entrance and swirled it there. She groaned and her fingers further tangled into my hair. I rubbed her clit with my other hand. I moved back to her clit with my tongue, pulling it in between my teeth. Her hips bucked and I could feel her muscles begin to clench around my fingers. I added a third finger and pumped faster. Her arousal was pouring down my hand and was spread across my face. I turned my hand over and curled my fingers, effectively rubbing her g-spot. I suckled on her clit, lightly nibbling it. I felt her pussy clamp down on my fingers and I eagerly lapped up all of her juices. I kept pumping and sucking as she rode out her orgasm. Her body was flushed and her breathing was ragged. Bella is a gorgeous woman. However, Bella was the most beautiful after she cums. I removed my fingers from her tight pussy and she grabbed my hand. She drew my fingers into her hot mouth and sucked them. I groaned as I watch her fellate my fingers, covered in her cum. Her eyes piercing into mine.

I smiled as I watched her, "HMMMM...Bella: the breakfast of champions," I teased.

Bella released my fingers and quirked an eyebrow. "I need my own breakfast. Take off your pants and underwear, Edward. "

"Yes ma'am," I replied with a grin. I eased the flannel pants and boxers off my body. My erect cock sprang from my pants. Bella pushed me back onto the bed and she straddled my waist. Her pussy hovering over my dick. I just wanted to raise my hips and plunge into her. She lightly scratched on my chest. She leaned forward and kissed my collarbones, moving down to my nipples. She nibbled on my nipples, looking at me through her long lashes. She scooted her body down and she traced my tattoo with her soft fingers. Her tongue mirrored what her fingers just did. She kissed and nibbled from hipbone to hipbone. My hips were moving of their own volition, trying to create friction. She smiled and turned her attention to my cock. With her hand, she rubbed the tip, spreading the pre-cum that had gathered there. I gently moved her hair over her shoulder so I could watch. She looked back up at me and pressed a kiss to the head of my dick. She opened her mouth and swirled her tongue over the top.



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My head fell back into the pillows. Her hands were pumping my cock and massaging my balls. She moved her hot mouth down along my dick, bobbing her head. She shifted her body and she ran her teeth along the shaft of my cock. I groaned and my hands moved to her silky hair. "Bella. That feels so good."

She hummed against my cock and began bobbing faster, squeezing my balls. I could feel my muscles tighten and I knew I was close. "Bella, I want to be in you. I need to feel you."

Her mouth and hands pulled away and she straddled my waist. She positioned my cock at her entrance and plunged it into her pussy. "Holy fuck, baby." She rotated her hips and she reached for my hands. I sat up and I laced my fingers with hers. With my other hand, I held onto her hip. I raised my face and she leaned down, thrusting her tongue into my mouth. She pulled away and her eyes were blazing. "I love you, Bella."

"Oh, God. Edward, I love you so much. You make me feel so good," she moaned.

"Come with me, love. I'm close. I want to feel you come," I growled. Bella began moving her body faster. I reached in between us and pinched her clit with my fingers. Her breathing was erratic, as was mine.

"Edward, Oh GOD! Edward," she cried as her muscles clenched around my cock. I pumped in two more times before I felt my dick twitch and I emptied in her tight little pussy.

"Holy shit! Bella! I love you, baby!" I breathed against her neck. Bella stopped her motions and laid her head against my shoulder. She pressed a kiss to my neck and moved up to my earlobe. She pulled it between her teeth. My dick twitched at the sensation.

"I love you, Edward. I will never, ever get tired of that," she said. "However, I never got *my* breakfast of champions."

## La Cantante

"Sorry, love. I just needed to feel you," I said, kissing her cheeks. Bella got off of my lap and I sighed at the loss of our connection.

"Come on, handsome. Let's shower. I can get my breakfast in the shower," she said with a suggestive wiggle of her brows. My cock perked up and followed Bella into the shower.

xx LC xx

After Bella got her 'breakfast' and a steamy session of shower sex, we decided to get ready for our day of exploration in Toronto. I pulled on a pair of dark wash jeans, a dark gray button down and a black sweater. I also brought with me my leather jacket that Bella had confiscated. She said I needed to wear it this weekend so it can "smell like me." Bella was wearing a pair of dark jeans as well, with a tan v-neck sweater that hugged all of her curves. She put on a brown leather jacket that Alice insisted that she have.

Rose got back to the room a little after 10 and took a quick shower. Bella blushed as Rose went into the bathroom and I chuckled at her reaction. Bella was still a shade of pink when Rose emerged from the bathroom. Rose took a look at Bella and then looked at me.

"Please tell me you guys didn't defile the shower?" Rose asked. She looked at Bella's deepening blush and my laughter and she threw a pillow at me. "You guys are insatiable."

"Okay, Sex Fairy," I laughed. Rosalie walked up to me and smacked me in the chest.

"I thought you'd go at in the bed, not the bathroom," she snickered. "Let me put on some make-up and then we're meeting Tyler, Ben, Mike and Jessica in the lobby. While you two were sexing it up in here, they created a plan of attack for our excursion in Toronto."

Rose went back in the bathroom, making a face at us before stepping inside and put on some make up. About ten minutes later, we were heading down into

## La Cantante

the lobby to meet up with our group. Mike and Jessica were attached at each other's faces. Tyler and Ben were mocking them. Mike and Jessica were completely oblivious to their teasing. Bella and I walked up to them, our hands linked. Rose was close behind.

"Hey guys," Rose said.

Mike and Jessica broke apart and smiled at each other before turning their attention to us. They were truly nauseating.

*Were Bella and I that bad?*

"Hola, kiddos! Or should I say bonjour?" Tyler said with a bad French accent.

"Hey everyone. What's the plan for today?" I asked, wrapping my arm around Bella's waist.

"We have a nice combination of culture and fun. We're planning on starting with the Hockey Hall of Fame for the guys. Then we're going to go the Distillery District for some lunch and pub action. Next we're going to head to CN Tower and if there's time, the Eaton Centre," Tyler explained. "We're going to take a cab to the Hockey Hall of Fame and then take public transit for the rest of the day. Ben already arranged for the cab and they're waiting outside for us."

We all walked out and got into the van that was going to take us to our first destination. I was not much of a hockey fan, but the other guys in the group were huge followers. Tyler and Ben liked the New York Rangers and Mike was a Blackhawks fan. The short van ride and we were at the Hockey Hall of Fame. I graciously paid for Bella and Rose. We all separated and decided to meet up in the front foyer in an hour and half. Bella, Rose and I meandered in the NHL Zone for a little bit, not really paying attention to the exhibits. The only thing I was interested in was seeing the Stanley Cup. After our exploration of the NHL Zone, we walked to the Verizon Great Hall. Rose had brought her camera and she snapped a few pictures in front of the Stanley cup. We wandered for a bit more and then walked to the gift shop. There was nothing

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there that caught our eye, but we spent the rest of our time in the gift store. My phone chirped and it was Tyler saying that they were heading to the foyer. I motioned to Bella and Rose that we were getting ready to go.

We got to the foyer first and we just hung out and waited for the rest of the group. They arrived and we decided to walk to the Distillery District. It was about a twenty minute walk. I pulled out my phone and got some directions. We headed off to a pub that sounded interesting, The Mill Street Brew Pub. We walked into the restaurant and were seated right away. We got settled into our table and the waitress came and took our order. We all decided to try some of the local beer and it was really good. I was partial to the coffee porter, as was Bella, to my surprise. I would have pegged her to like the lighter beers. However, she pounded the coffee porter like a pro. After our lunch, we walked around the Distillery District for a bit before heading to CN Tower. We had to take public transportation to get to the CN Tower. It was about a twenty-five trek by walking and using the light-rail.

We got to the CN Tower and headed up to the Lookout Level. Rose took pictures of the group. She asked an older gentleman to take a picture of all of us. We then went to the Glass Floor Level. We all tried it but Mike was too chicken to get onto the glass floor. He was afraid that he was going fall to his death. Jessica called him a chicken. We ended our time at the CN Tower in the Sky Pod.

Our last stop in Toronto was the Eaton Centre. It was right by the CN Tower. We decided to split again and travel around the huge mall. The girls decided to walk together and the guys did our own thing. I really wanted to just be with Bella, but I couldn't monopolize her time. It was an unexpected treat this morning and I could relish in that as we walked around the mall. We decided to meet up with the girls at 4:30 for some dinner before heading back to our hotel, which was right by the mall. We decided on going to Mr. Greenjeans. We ate a filling meal before walking back to the hotel. Once we got back to the room, Bella and I decided to lie down on our bed, watching some television. Rose pulled out her laptop and checked her email. She also loaded up the pictures that she took of our day of touristy-fun. She created a photo website and shared it with all of us via email.

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About 5:40, I decided to quickly change. I grabbed my Emerson Express T-shirt and a long sleeve t-shirt and changed in the bathroom. The girls changed in the hotel room. I brushed my teeth and headed back into the hotel room. Rose was pulling her hair into a ponytail and Bella was tying her shoes. Rose ran into the bathroom and I snuck behind my girl. I slipped my arms around her waist as she was bent over. She quickly stood up and laced her fingers with mine.

"What are you doing, handsome?" she asked.

"Hugging my beautiful girlfriend. I had a lot of fun today, love," I said nuzzling her hair.

"Me too. In more ways than two. This morning was the best, though," she giggled.

"You can say that again, love. I am so tempted to get an apartment for second semester. This whole living in triples nonsense is not cool. I don't get to spend nearly enough alone time with you, Bella," I whined.

"Edward, you don't need to get an apartment. I think we're doing just fine. Would I like to spend more time with just the two of us? Yes. However, with the rooming situation it makes our alone time more special. Also, you might get sick of me if you spend all your spare time with me," she said turning her body in my arms.

"Um, that would NEVER happen. I could never get sick of you. It might be the other way around," I teased.

Bella glared at me. "Don't look at me in that tone of voice, beautiful," I said, kissing her lips. "However, I am looking at apartments. Seriously. Let's just say that spending more time with you is a huge reason why, but the snoring twins are driving me nuts. Both Jasper and Emmett are horrible snorers. I'm losing my mind with the lack of sleep."

## La Cantante

"Yeah, Emmett makes some unique noises. If it's not coming from his mouth, it's coming from his ass. He's notorious for sleep-farting. They are nasty. His room is usually covered in a brown colored cloud from his stench," Bella said, scrunching her nose.

"Here's something else for you to think about. You could move in with me," I suggested with a crooked grin.

"Edward, there is no way in heaven, hell or anywhere in between that I can afford an apartment," she said reasonably.

"Who said that you would be paying for the apartment? Bella, I can afford to pay for an apartment for the both of us. We could get a two bedroom if you're more comfortable. I would love to live with you," I wheedled.

"I would love to live with you, but I'm not sure," Bella said nervously.

"When we get back from this trip, I'll look into apartments that are within walking distance of Emerson. I'm not saying that it'll happen, but I at least want to look," I said with a smile.

"There's no harm in looking. However, I'm not committing to anything. Not yet. Got it?" Bella said as she poked me in the chest.

"Got it. Love you."

"Love you, too. Let's go dance. Yay. Rose! Let's boogie," Bella bellowed.

"Give me a second. I'm almost ready," Rose yelled through the bathroom door.

I quickly changed my shoes to my running shoes and splashed on some cologne. Rose exited out of the bathroom and her hair was curled in her ponytail. She slipped on her shoes and grabbed her key. I slipped the keycard into my wallet and we went downstairs to the lobby. Felix quickly took attendance and we loaded onto the bus, heading to the Four Seasons Centre. It was a short, immensely short drive but we needed the coach bus with all of our

## La Cantante

equipment. The guys got out of the bus and began unloading the equipment: the risers, instruments and sound equipment. We swiftly moved through the backstage area and set up our risers on the stage. The instrumentalists got their things set up as well. After a quick warm-up, we ran through our show that we were performing for the competition. We were singing six songs for our show. We were beginning with "River Deep Mountain High," then our ballad, "No Air." After the ballad, was "Four Minutes." This was a last minute change. Felix felt that this piece was amazing and really pushed for us to do it. I was nervous as fuck. Next was our Gloria Estefan Megamix and we added another ballad, "Smile." We then finished our set with "Proud Mary."

Felix and Demetri were in the auditorium taking notes for us. After our run-through, Felix gave us some areas of improvement. We spot-checked those areas and ran those songs a second time. In our group, eight of us wore wireless microphones to assure that we were heard over the instruments. Rose, Bella and I were a part of the select few who wore these microphones. There were some microphone snafus, but with some minor adjustments, it was fixed. For the rehearsal, the microphones were on our clothes. For the actual performance, the mics would be weaved through our hair and hidden up there.

After our final run-through, Felix and Demetri were very pleased with our performances. Felix was confident in our talents in progressing to the semi-finals. They dismissed us and we unloaded the stage. We were told to put our risers and equipment in a small section in the backstage area. After we dismantled the stage, we walked back to the hotel and settled into our rooms.

A half hour after we got back from our rehearsal, my phone buzzed in my pocket.

*Alcohol. Room 221. Now. - Tyler*

*Bring Rose and Bella. - Tyler*

"Hey ladies, our presence has been requested by Tyler. There's some type of party in his room," I laughed. I held up the phone and Rose snorted.

## La Cantante

"Let me change out of my Express shirt and we can head down there," Rose said.

"Me, too," Bella chimed in.

"Cool," I said with a smile. I quickly tapped out a response to Tyler's text.

*We're changing out of the Express shirts and will be down there in a little bit. - E*

*Sweeeeeeeeeeeeeet! I'm so drunk already - Tyler*

*Oh good lord - E*

*You're joining me, buddy - Tyler*

*Buzzed, yes. Drunk, no - E*

*Loser - Tyler*

*Whatever, T. You'll be hurting tomorrow and you'll not get any sympathy from me - E*

I put on the button down that I had on underneath my sweater from earlier. Bella put her tan sweater back on as well. Rose was wearing a red cardigan. I grabbed my key and we headed down to room 221.

In the room was a bunch of upper classmen from Express. This was in addition to Tyler, Ben, Mike and Jessica. As soon as we walked in the door, a beer was pressed into my hand. Bella was also holding a beer and Rosalie was going for a pop. There was a sound dock on one of the night stands and there were some tunes blaring. I pulled Bella to the small couch by the window of the room. Rose followed and sat down on the floor.

"This is going to be interesting," Rose laughed.



## La Cantante

"Tell me about it. Felix is going to be pissed of everyone here is hung-over. We had an awesome rehearsal tonight and if we fuck it up tomorrow, I don't want to even imagine," I concurred. I took a sip of my beer. I made a face and put it on the table.

"Don't like it?" Bella asked.

"Not really. It has a funny flavor to it. It reminds me of sweat socks," I said, scrunching my nose. Bella took my beer bottle from the table and took a tentative swig. Her face contorted and she made a gagging noise.

"That is just foul," she squeaked.

"I'm going to find something else. Are you two okay or do you want a different alcoholic beverage?" I asked.

"I'm good with soda. I don't want to be sloshed tomorrow. If we don't make it to the finals, I'm drinking tomorrow night," Rose said.

"A mixed drink, Edward. I don't really care, just not this nasty beer," Bella said, squeezing my knee.

"You got it." I got up off the couch and headed to the 'bar.' I made Bella a rum and diet coke and I got a sprite and vodka for myself. I know that I won't be hung-over if I drink vodka. As I was finishing up our drinks, I felt a hand on my shoulder. It was Kate. She was friends with Tanya and a member of Express.

"Hey, Eddie," she said with a smile.

"Seriously, Kate?" I asked with a smirk. "The name's Edward. You've been hanging out with Tanya too much."

"Sorry. Well, not really. Tanya has been asking about you. She misses you, Edward," Kate said with a pout.

## La Cantante

"I don't miss her. If you're here to do reconnaissance, don't waste your time. I'm never going to go back to Tanya. Ever. Even if she is the last female on the planet and it was our job to save the human race. I'm in a fantastic relationship and I couldn't be happier," I said, inching away from Kate.

"So, your little mouse is keeping you satisfied?" Kate snarled.

"Not that it's any of your business, Kate, but yes she is. Excuse me," I sneered.

"I give it another month, maybe two and then you'll come crawling back to Tanya. If it doesn't work out with her, I'm available. I always thought you were hot and Tanya never sounded unsatisfied," Kate said with a wink.

"No thanks. The same thing applies to you. Not even if you were the last female on the planet." I turned on my heel and walked back to Bella and Rose. I handed Bella her drink and she took a sip, smiling at my choice. I downed my beverage and then chugged the sweat-sock beer.

"You okay, Edward?" Rose asked. "You look a little flustered and you just drank *that*."

"I just got cornered by Kate, Tanya's friend. She just said some things that were a bit unsettling. However, anything that is related to Tanya is unsettling," I shuddered.

"She's a skank. Actually both of them are," Bella said. "Tanya needs to invest in clothes that actually fit her. Sorry, honey but extra small on double-Ds ain't gonna cut it. Kate just needs to stop being Tanya's little bitch."

"Wow, Bella. Blunt much?" Rose teased.

"Sorry. I get a bit of booze in me and my filter goes OUT the window. If Kate gets in my face, I'll rip her a new one," Bella said, sipping her drink.

"Remind me to never get on your bad side when you're drunk, Bella. I don't think my balls would survive," I laughed.

## La Cantante

"They wouldn't. Trust me. Don't fuck with Drunk Bella," she said with a smirk. "Can I have another one?"

"Slow down there, killer. You don't want to be shit-faced tomorrow. Let's have one more and then we'll head back to the room," I reasoned.

"You get have more than that," Bella whined.

"Bella, I'm bigger than you. I've also drunk more than you have," I teased, brushing her hair off her face.

"How do you know?" she giggled.

"Because you've had two sips of beer and one drink mixed drink and you're ready to kick some ass. You're a lightweight," I replied.

"Yeah, Bells. You are pretty lit and you've only had one drink. You need to build up your tolerance," Rose snickered.

"You both suck. I'm perfectly fine," Bella slurred. She stood up and shakily walked to the 'bar.' She made another drink for herself and stumbled back to the couch, plopping down next to me, spilling some of her drink on the floor. "Shit. I spilled my alcohol. Damn it."

I snorted at her reactions. She really was a lightweight. Bella glared at me and I could barely contain my laughter. She was so adorable whilst she was inebriated. I pressed a kiss to her temple and she settled into my side, nursing her drink. Rose got up and went to get another pop. She also got me some water. We hung out in the hotel room for a little bit longer. Bella was feeling no pain by the time we left. She was stumbling as we made for the door. As soon as we got into the hallway, I scooped her up and carried her back to our room. She smacked my chest, proclaiming that she could walk on her own two feet. I raised my brow and held her closer to my body, preventing her from squirming out of my arms. Rose opened the door and dashed into the bathroom changing into her pajamas. I helped Bella put on hers and she was giggling. She was fascinated with my buttons on my shirt, saying that they were shiny. I

## La Cantante

laughed told her that she was drunk. I quickly changed into my pajamas and tucked us into the bed. Bella was out before her head hit the pillow. I set the alarm for 6:30 so the girls could get dressed for the show. Rose laughed at drunk Bella, who was snoring and drooling on my chest. I shrugged and turned off the lights. I kissed Bella's forehead and fell into a deep sleep.

xx LC xx

"Ugh," Bella groaned. "Stop the pounding in my head."

"Serves you right, lush," I laughed.

"Shut it, you. I'm such an idiot," Bella grumbled into my chest. I had to take off my shirt last night while we were sleeping because of Bella's drunk drooling.

"Where's your shirt?"

"On the floor, lightweight. It got washed last night."

"Huh?"

"You were drooling, baby. It was kind of cute for the first fifteen minutes, then you soaked through my shirt," I said, kissing her nose.

"Crap. I'm sorry, Edward. I really am a lightweight. Damn," she said sitting up in bed. She grabbed her head and groaned again. "Make it stop."

"I have a magical remedy, beautiful," I replied. I handed her a bottle of water and three ibuprofen. I also gave her a stress relief vitamin. She quirked a brow and she downed all the pills and chugged the water.

"My head still hurts."

"It doesn't work instantaneously, love. Give it a half hour. I'm going to head down to Tyler and Ben's room to get ready. I'm assuming you ladies are going to monopolize the bathroom to make yourselves gorgeous. However, you already look radiant, Bella."

## La Cantante

"You're full of shit, Edward. I looked something that a cat coughed up. I certainly feel like it," Bella snorted. "Where's Rose?"

"She's in the shower or something. When she woke up, she was giggling at you. You were cutting some serious zs. You almost rivalled Emmett," I chortled.

"Laugh it up, Cullen. I'll send you sleep with Mike and Jessica."

"I love you, Bella," I replied.

"Yeah, sure you do. Hit me while I'm down already and then suck up to me? Really mature, Edward. What are you five?" Bella teased.

"No. I'm at least ten. Double digits and all."

"Whatever. Have you seen my phone?"

"I plugged it in to charge. It's on the desk. Why?"

"No reason. I thought I put it in my purse and you moved it. No big deal. Thanks for plugging it in. I guess I forgive you. You did provide me with a 'magical' remedy for my hangover and let me drool all over you."

"This is true. I'm going to grab my stuff and head down to shower, shave and get ready. I'll be back in a little bit. I love you, beautiful."

"I love you, too, Edward. See you in a bit."

I grabbed my tuxedo, laptop bag, toiletry bag and key card and walked down to Tyler and Ben's room. I knocked on the door and a very sleepy Bed opened the door. He ushered me in and I darted into the bathroom to take care of making myself presentable for the show. I showered and shaved. I attempted to make my hair look like I actually combed it but as usual would not lay down straight. I styled it with some of the pomade and gave up. I threw on a white undershirt and pulled on my tuxedo pants. I walked back out into the hotel room. Tyler

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was still sleeping and Ben was watching television. I had texted him when I woke up asking to use their bathroom. He said he was fine with it and Tyler was unconscious so he didn't have a say.

Ben went into the shower as I sat down on the couch and took out my laptop. I checked my email and found an email from my biochemistry professor. He apologized for being an ass about my test. He said that he had a rough morning and took it out on me. He said that I could make up the exam on my return on Monday without any penalty. I sent a quick response thanking him for his apology and asking when it would be convenient to meet. I surfed the web for a bit, looking for some new songs for Breaking Midnight and downloading some potentials on my iPod. When Ben got out of the shower, I pulled on my socks and my tuxedo shirt. I quickly tied my tie and put on my vest and jacket. I put on some cologne and decided to head back to my room. Tyler was still out and Ben begged me to help me get him up.

Ben pulled back the covers and instructed me to grab one of Tyler's feet. I did and Ben grabbed the other one. We heaved together and dragged Tyler off the bed and onto the floor.

"What the fuck?"

"Get up, you ass. We have a show," Ben sniggered.

"You could have just shaken me, damn it," Tyler snapped.

"I tried. It wouldn't work. So, Edward and I literally and figuratively dragged your ass out of bed. Go shower, dipshit," Ben said, pointing at the bathroom.

"Fuck you and the horse you rode in on, assholes," Tyler grumbled as he got off the floor. He smacked Ben in the shoulder and gave me the finger. He slammed the bathroom door shut and we heard the shower start.

"Thanks for the use of the bathroom. I'll see you guys in a little bit," I said with a smile, rolling my eyes at Tyler.

## La Cantante

I grabbed my laptop and clothes and headed back to my room. I knocked before I opened the door. I didn't want to see Rose in a state of undress. I faintly permission to enter and I unlocked the door. I dropped my laptop by the door and put my sleep clothes in my suitcase in the closet.

Rose was fully dressed, hair curled and make up on. Bella was sitting in a chair by the desk, with Rose curling her hair with a curling iron. Bella's make up was done and it enhanced her beauty. Her skin was glowing and she had a subtle coating of blush. Her eyes were done up more heavily than usual, with shades of grey, lilac and purple. On her lips was a bit of gloss and some pink lipstick.

"Wow, you both look fabulous," I said sincerely.

"Thanks, Edward. If left to her own devices, this one would look like a hoochie," Rose admonished.

"I would not, bitch! Jeez. I do my own make up for a show and I get ridiculed for life. The way I looked on Homecoming was how we were made up for our shows in high school," Bella explained.

"Well, you all looked like hos. Now that you have Alice or me, you'll look classic. Right, Edward?" Rosalie said to me pointedly.

"I plead the fifth. No matter what, Bella looks gorgeous," I replied nervously.

"Smart man. You value your testicles. I don't want imagine the damage that Bella could inflict to you in three inch character shoes," Rose laughed.

"I don't want imagine that, either. I think my balls just crawled into my body at the thought," I shuddered. "How's the hangover, Bella?"

"Magic remedy worked wonders. What was that little red pill you gave me?"

"A stress relief vitamin. That's the magic remedy. Whenever I drink too much, I take one of those and the hangover goes away," I said, sitting on the bed.

## La Cantante

"Good to know," Bella said, giving me a wink in the mirror. Rose finished curling Bella's hair and pulled it into a half ponytail. After a bit of fluffing, Bella was all set for the show. Bella smoothed her dress and stood up. She walked over to my garment bag and pulled out her shoes. She slipped on her character shoes and attached the buckle. Rose did some quick touch ups and then put on her own shoes. I took a peek at the clock and it was nearly time to go. I pulled on my tuxedo jacket and made sure my shoes were tied. I slipped the room key into my pocket of my jacket and grabbed the duffel that Bella had packed with our change of clothes. Rose stopped me and put a small bag with 'necessities' for multiple performances into the duffel. We made one last check of the room and headed down to the lobby of the hotel.

We got downstairs and it was a sea of sequins, tuxedos and hairspray. It was overwhelming. We decided that we were walking to the Four Seasons Centre as a warm up and do our vocal warm up in the performance space. It took us a few minutes to walk to the auditorium and get settled in the warm up room. We did a quick vocal warm up and ran through the pieces. Felix wanted to fine tune some dynamic things with the ballads but we were pretty solid. We also gathered our wireless mics and we put them on. He gathered us into a large circle and we said a quick prayer before we headed out to set up the stage.

For the competition, we had 30 minutes to set up the stage, perform our pieces and tear down the stage. The judges were looking at several things during our performance. They looked at creativity in choreography, musicianship, stage presence, vocal production and overall entertainment value. Based on their scores, we could go onto the next round, the semi-finals in the evening. If we did go on to the semi-finals, we would switch out the extra ballad and put in another fast dance number, where the choreography was quite complex as was the arrangement of the piece, which was "Blah, Blah, Blah," by Ke\$ha. I personally could not stand the song, but it was a show stopper.

The stage manager poked her head in and told us it was nearly time for us to begin our set up. I gave Bella a quick kiss, picking her up off the floor. She squeezed my ass and gave me a wink. We headed down the dark hallway and waited backstage. The stage manager gave us the go ahead and we quickly set up our risers, microphones, and instruments. We did a quick sound check and



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we headed onstage for our first song, "River Deep Mountain High." The song went very smoothly. I could tell that Bella was very nervous. When I went to pick her up for the final lift of the song, her body was very tense. Before I dropped her down and we moved to our next formation in "No Air," I gave her a squeeze and wink. She took a breath and gave me a smile. The next piece was our Gloria Estefan Megamix. This was a crowd pleaser and a lot of fun. Bella was beginning to relax and enjoying the performance.

The next piece was Rose's and my duet. I was so nervous that I would fumble over my own feet and reinjure my knee. It still was a bit tender. I wore the knee brace under my tuxedo pants. Before the song began, Bella gave me a grin and Rose squeezed my hand. We danced full out and sang like there was no tomorrow. We finished our duet and I held Rose in the final pose. She gave me a radiant smile. "Great job, Edward. You nailed it," Rose mouthed.

We finished our show with "Smile" and "Proud Mary." Overall, it was a solid performance. There were no fumbles and we sang and danced confidently. After our final song, we took our bows and the curtains closed. We quickly dismantled the stage and headed off to our warm up room. Felix was in there waiting for us, bouncing on his toes.

*There's something you don't see every day. A 6'7", 250 lb. man bouncing on his toes like Alice.*

He squealed as we walked in. Yes. Squealed. Can the man be any more gay? I love Felix, but sometimes his gayness was a bit much. He was very pleased and was confident that we made it to the semi-finals. We hung out in the warm up room as we waited for our scores. Bella sat on my lap, idly playing with my hair. I gently scratched up and down her arms as we waited. Rose was chatting with Tyler, giving him shit about his 'almost' drop that he did with her. One of the competition representatives came into our room and stood in front of us.

"Good morning, Emerson Express. My name is Heidi Montoya and I represent The Greater Toronto Show Choir Festival and Competition. On behalf of the organization and the city of Toronto, I would like to congratulate you on a job well-done. Based on your scores, you have successfully moved on to the

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Semi-Final round. Your performance time will be at 6:15 this evening. You are allowed to make one song change for your next performance. However, this change will need to stay constant for Finals performance, should you make it that far. I will be leaving you comment sheets with your director. Congratulations and we look forward to seeing you perform again this evening."

As soon as Heidi left, we all erupted into a loud cheer. Felix got us to quiet down and gave us our comments.

"Okay, here's what the judges said. Overall, strong performance. Your group has an even mix of strong dancers and strong singers. Your song choices were diverse and fun. It kept us on our toes. You did make a risky decision in choosing a dance duet, with singing as the background. However, it was a wise decision as the two dancers/singers were phenomenal. The young woman had a strong voice and was a fantastic dancer. The young man had a fantastic voice and moved very well. He should consider a career in music. Very promising if he does so. Awesome job, Edward. If I wasn't married and you weren't my student, I'd kiss you."

"Thanks, Felix?" I said with a nervous chuckle.

"Honey, that's a good thing. He's proud of you," Demetri clarified.

"Great," I said, turning as red as a tomato.

Bella nuzzled my neck, sucking on my earlobe. "You did wonderfully, Edward. I got all hot and bothered watching you dance. You are so sexy, baby. I love you."

"Thanks, beautiful. I love you more," I said giving her a kiss.

"Okay, you two. Quit sucking face. We're not done with the comments," Felix scolded. "Some items for improvement. In 'Proud Mary,' there was a fumble with the dancer from the duet and another young man. Please don't let the mistakes get you flustered. Add some more dynamics to your ballads and

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perhaps some more subtle movement. We look forward to your performance this evening.

"Great job, Express. I'm proud of you. You all did really well. I concur with what the judges said. Now, do we want to switch out 'Smile' with 'Blah, Blah, Blah,' or keep it as is?"

"I think we should keep it as is. The faster song is not as solid as 'Smile.' It also allows us to show our dynamic range and voices," Ben said.

"Any one disagree with Ben?" Felix asked. "Silence means consensus...? Okay, we're keeping our show as is. Use this time wisely in between our sets and we'll meet back in the lobby at 5:15."

xx LC xx

We headed back to the hotel and hung out in our room. Bella decided to take a nap. Her headache came back after our performance. We then headed back to Eaton Centre for some lunch. We decided to head back to Mr. Greenjeans and partake in some good grease. We watched television and relaxed until four when the girls decided to touch up their make up for our evening performance. Bella and Rose made their make up a little heavier and changed up their hair, making it a bit bigger. We met in the lobby and headed back to the Four Seasons Centre. We did a warm up and ran our ballads. Felix really wanted us to 'schmaltz' them up.

Like earlier, the stage manager poked her head in and let us know that it was time for us to perform. We would be performing for a different set of judges for this show. We quickly set up our risers, instruments and microphones. We performed our show with a rousing show of support from the audience and it really hyped us up. We put on a better show this time around than this morning. Part of it was because of the audience enthusiasm and another part of it was due to the fact that half of the group was not hung-over. After our final piece, we took our bows and the curtains closed. We dismantled the stage and waited in the warm up room for our fate. We all took similar spots as this morning. About a half hour after our performance, Heidi entered the room.

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"Good evening, Emerson Express. Once again, on behalf of the Greater Toronto Show Choir Festival and Competition, thank you for your hard work and dedication. It was another fantastic performance. However, based on your scores, you will not be asked to perform at our final performance tomorrow afternoon. As a group, you needed to get an overall score of 150 and you just missed it by getting a 148. We do invite you to come back next year. I'll be leaving your comments with your director. You can pick up your final comment sheets, tapes, trophies and participation t-shirts tomorrow morning before you check out of your hotel. Thank you again for coming out to compete and we look forward to seeing you next year."

Heidi handed Felix a packet and she turned on her heel and left. We grumbled at the news, but were still happy about our performance. Felix read our commentary. The comments were positive. This set of judges felt that the duet with Rosalie was awesome and that we had a future in Broadway. I would say not as I can't act to save my life. Felix also stated that even though we didn't get into the finals, he was incredibly proud of us and that he couldn't ask for a better group of performers. Felix called the bus driver and he pulled up to the back entrance of the auditorium and we loaded up our risers, sound system and instruments. After we did that, we headed back to the hotel. We were all pretty glum and we decided to go to a club close to the hotel.

A group of about twenty of us, including Felix and Demetri went to the club. Rosalie, Bella and I went onto the dance floor and we were having a good time. After about a half hour, Rose said that she wanted a drink. She motioned to the bar and asked if we wanted anything. I said I wanted a beer and handed her some money. She swatted my hand away and turned to go to the bar. Bella snaked her hands around my neck and moved her hips seductively against mine. My dick was straining in my jeans at her moves. Rose returned with the drinks; a beer for me, a martini for her and a water for Bella. She turned and danced with Ben. Bella and I continued to be lost in our little bubble of lust. Bella stood on her tiptoes and crushed her lips against mine. Her tongue moved along my bottom lip and I eagerly opened my mouth. I pulled her body flush with mine and held her tightly by the hips. Nothing seemed to matter except Bella and me.

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We were pulled out of our reverie by Mike. He said that we were all heading back to the hotel. Felix was insistent that we stay together as a group. We walked to our table and picked up our coats. We lazily walked back to the hotel, enjoying the time away from campus. When we got back to the hotel, we all changed into our pajamas and settled in to go to sleep.

xx LC xx

The rest of the trip was pretty fun. We went and watched the final performances of the show choirs. We were impressed with what we saw. Felix also said that he got some great ideas from some new songs and choreography. After the final performances, we loaded onto the bus. The luggage monkeys put our suitcases in the cargo hold of the bus and we prepared for our four hour trip back to campus.

We got back to Emerson a little after nine at night. Rose, Bella and I walked back to Patterson. I was their own personal luggage monkey. I was more than willing, as they lugged my suitcase to Brandon the day we left. I dropped off their bags and Bella said good night. I wanted to spend some time with her, but Alice had other ideas. Whatever Alice wants, Alice gets. I gave my girl a kiss before heading up to my own room. I unpacked my bags and threw my clothes into my hamper. I'd have to do laundry on Monday. I was getting ready to go to bed, when I heard a faint knock on the door. I opened the door.

"Hey, handsome."

"Bella! I though Alice would have handcuffed you to the bed," I laughed.

"I'd rather you do that, Edward," she purred. "Can I sleep up here? I got used to having you next to me."

"Let me think about that. Hell, yeah," I said as I opened the door wider. She gave a wave to Emmett who winked at her. Bella crawled into my bed and settled under the covers. I gave her a kiss and held her to my chest. "I could get used to this."

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"Used to what, handsome?" she mumbled sleepily.

"Having you sleep next to me," I said into her hair.

"I could get used to it, too. You're actually quite comfortable. You make a great pillow," she giggled.

"I'm glad I can serve," I said sardonically. "I love you, beautiful. Sleep well."

"I love you, too, *il mio ballerino*," she said with a smile.

"Did you just call me a ballerina?" I snorted.

"I called you my dancer in Italian, you dork," she laughed. "Go to sleep, ballerina."

"Oh good lord. Good night, beautiful. I'm not a ballerina."

"Good night, handsome."

**A/N: Okay, this chapter is a beast. It covered a lot. I hope you enjoyed it. Up next will be the performance for University Singers, some minor drama with Seth, and a resolution with James. Please leave a review. They make me happy :)**

# Magnificat

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 36: Magnificat

### BPOV

Back to reality.

*Fuck.*

Back to classes.

*Double fuck.*

Back to rehearsals.

*Triple fuck.*

Back to Alice.

*And you are telling Edward to not move into an apartment because...*

Shut it! Edward having an apartment would sweet. I mean really sweet, but it's entirely unnecessary. He paid to live on campus as did I.

*The school can refund your on-campus living expenses and you can use that money to live in the apartment with Edward, you idiot.*

He said that he'd just look. That doesn't mean that he would sign a lease

## La Cantante

tomorrow. I said that there is no harm in *LOOKING*. So, I'll encourage him to look and cross that bridge when and if he finds a place that he likes.

*Living in sin is quite fun. You should try it. WITH EDWARD! Why deny the handsome, bronze-headed hottie who wants to jump your bones at every opportunity. He smells good and is definitely easy on the eyes. DAMN!*

I really need to curtail this inner-monologue thing. People might think that I'm crazy, or something.

*Too late!*

Fuck. I think I have officially lost my mind.

xx LC xx

We got back from Toronto and we unpacked our bags. Rose showed Alice the pictures that she took of our trip and they turned out really well. Rose had set up a website and she had emailed it to Edward and me. She said that we could print out any picture through the website. There a few pictures of Edward and me that I wanted for my room.

After we unpacked our bags, Alice proceeded to ask us about the trip. She wanted to hear about what we did, the latest gossip and about the competition. I told Alice about our day-excursion around Toronto. Rose told Alice about the latest gossip, as she hung out with more people than I did. We tag-teamed telling Alice about the competition. She felt that we got robbed on being denied going to finals. We were bummed, yes. However, did we learn from our experience? Definitely. Would we change our approach to choreography and song selection? Absolutely.

We spent about two hours chatting before hitting the sack. I was tired but I couldn't get comfortable.

*I wonder why?*



Seriously?

After about a half hour of tossing and turning, I gave up and padded up the stairs to Edward's room. I tentatively knocked on the door and Edward, in his shirtless glory, opened it up.

"Hey, handsome."

*I want to lick those abs. Delicious.*

"Bella! I thought that Alice would have handcuffed you to the bed," Edward laughed.

"I'd rather you do that."

*Filter! Non-existent. Just move in with his hotness.*

"Can I sleep here? I got used to having you next to me," I said, looking up at Edward through my lashes. I know he'll say yes. I can already see it in his eyes. He teased, saying he had to think about it. However, he opened the door and I breezed into the room. Emmett gave me a wink and rolled over in his bed. I settled into his bed and he lay down next to me, giving me a kiss. I nestled into his chest.

"I could get used to this," Edward said.

*I'm assuming sleeping in the same bed for the rest of our lives? Then, I would agree too. Can we start soon?*

"Used to what, handsome?"

"Having you sleep next to me."

*That's what I thought.*

## La Cantante

"I could get used to this, too. You're very comfortable. You make a great pillow," I giggled against his side. He really was comfortable. Edward was lean and muscular, but had the right amount of fat on his body so he wasn't skin and bones. He was perfect.

"I'm glad I can serve," he said sarcastically. "I love you. Sleep well."

"I love you too, *il mio ballerino*," I mumbled.

*Shit. That didn't come out right. It sounded like I called him a ballerina.*

"Did you just call me a ballerina?"

*Crap.*

"I called you my dancer in Italian, you dork. Go to sleep, ballerina."

"Oh good lord. Good night beautiful. I'm not a ballerina."

"Good night, handsome."

I cuddled closer to Edward's body and fell into a deep and dreamless sleep. It was all-too-soon that Edward's alarm shrilled from his desk. Edward groaned and held me closer. I happily burrowed deeper. The alarm shrilled again and Edward got up, cursing to his desk. He stopped his alarm and he sat down on the bed.

"I don't want to go to class," Edward pouted. "This sucks."

I opened my eyes and sat up. I grabbed my glasses from the edge of Edward's desk and slipped them onto my face. "I don't want to go to class, either. However, just think. After today, we'll be one day closer to Thanksgiving. One day closer to Christmas. One day closer to summer," I hedged.

"Thanksgiving I'm looking forward to. Christmas, not so much. I'm not going to see you for a week and a half. Summer, don't even get me started. I can't

## La Cantante

even fathom spending an entire summer away from you, beautiful."

"Shit, I didn't really think of it that way," I mumbled.

"However, we could solve that problem and get an apartment together. You'd be forced to stay here over the summer and we could be together, make love in the mornings, go to work together, have a nooner, make dinner together, make love in the kitchen..."

"Okay, Edward. You're painting a very tempting picture. I still need to think about it. Please?" I said with a smile.

"I'm sorry, baby. I don't mean to push you. I really don't. I just can't imagine not being with you. I love you, beautiful."

"Shut. The. Fuck. Up. You. Nauseating. People," Emmett bellowed from his bed.

"Sorry, Emmett," Edward and I replied.

"Are you sure you don't want me to get an apartment?" Edward wheedled.

"It's getting more and more tempting, Edward. Believe me. I love you, too. I'm going to shower and I'll see you in a bit," I said, getting out of bed. I got tangled in Edward's covers and managed to fall. Edward caught me and kissed my nose. He swatted my ass as I grabbed my keys and headed downstairs to my room.

I took a quick shower and attempted to fix my hair. I put some mousse in my locks and scrunched it so it would get curly. I put in my contacts and brushed my teeth. I then put on some light make up and walked back into the dorm room. I decided to dress it up a bit today. I'd been a slacker the past few weeks and I wanted to look nice for Edward and honestly for myself. I pulled out a black skirt and black tights. I also grabbed a royal blue argyle sweater and white blouse. I finished my look with a pair of knee-high boots with a modest heel and Edward's black leather jacket. I looked good. I put my necessary

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books into my messenger bag, along with my phone and keys. I put on some of my freesia body spray as I heard a knock on the door. I tiptoed to the door and opened it up. Edward was standing there, wearing a pair of dark jeans, green sweater and a white shirt under his sweater. He also had on a worn brown leather jacket and some brown boots on his feet. He had his sunglasses pushed up in his hair and a lopsided smirk on his face. He handed me my coffee and I gladly took it. We linked our fingers and walked to music theory.

We settled into our usual seats and waited for Larry to come in with James. I pulled out my staff paper, notebook and a pencil. Edward did the same and was humming a tune.

"That's nice. What is it?" I asked.

"It's something I'm working on. I'm writing a piece for Breaking Midnight and I can't get this set of notes out of my head. I jotted it down a couple of weeks ago, but haven't had a chance to do much with it. The past few weekends have insanely busy," Edward replied.

"I'm looking forward to hearing it, Edward. You are an amazing composer. That lullaby you composed for me is amazing," I said with a timid smile.

"Oh, that reminds me. Here," he said, taking out a CD from his bag.

"What's this?"

"Last Wednesday, I used my down time to use the recording studio in Brandon. I made you a CD of a few songs that I've written for the piano. The first one is your lullaby," Edward replied shyly.

"Oh, Edward. That is so sweet. Thank you for doing this for me! I love you, handsome," I gushed, getting out of my desk and plopping down on his lap, covering his face with kisses.

"You're quite welcome, beautiful. I'd do anything for you. I hope you like it," he laughed, kissing my forehead.

## La Cantante

"I'm certain I'll love it," I beamed as I gave him a searing kiss before going back to my own seat. Edward growled as I moved away and I saw him adjust himself in his jeans.

I slipped the CD into my bag and decided to upload it to my computer as soon as I got back to Patterson. I wanted Edward's music on my iPod. I smiled at my handsome and talented boyfriend, reaching over to caress his cheek. Edward leaned into my hand and kissed my palm, holding it to his face.

Larry walked in a few minutes later, looking a bit befuddled. He set down his briefcase and took out his book. He then walked to the center of the room. He didn't look happy.

"Good morning, ladies and gentleman. I hope you all had a restful weekend. It was probably better than mine. As you can see, James is no longer going to assist me in class. Due to his behavior in class, his rapport with the students and several complaints filed against him, James has been removed from the staff of Emerson University. Many of you complained about his teaching style along with some of his comments, looks and other behaviors. After his immediate dismissal, James didn't take the news well and he trashed his office and mine. I've spent the entire weekend cleaning up his mess, literally and figuratively.

"He was supposed to keep track of the grades for this class and you aural harmony class. He did not keep an accurate record of your test grades or in-class assignments. I've had to search through his entire office to find your work and some of you will not be happy to know that it was lost. I managed to get some of the files off his computer and download his grade book but, it was not complete. I need the following people to stay after class and I need to discuss with you how I'm going to proceed: Edward Cullen, Riley Pierson, Isabella Swan, and Bree Tanner. I'm sorry for the inconvenience and I'll try to make it as brief as possible."

I was shocked. I was eternally happy that James was no longer a part of the staff of Emerson University. He was an asshole. I was pissed that he was fucking with my grades. Hopefully, Larry would have a logical solution (not

redoing all of the work) to this problem. I looked next to me and I saw that Edward was fuming. His normal calm façade was cracking. His face was turning red, his green eyes blazing and his nostrils were flaring. I reached out my hand and gently squeezed his fingers. His eyes clamped shut and he laced his fingers with mine. I looked around the room and I saw similar reactions in Riley and Bree. This James character had truly fucked us over.

*Rat bastard.*

I barely remembered what happened during the rest of theory. I remembered taking notes and turning in my assignment. I kind of remembered Edward swearing at James and kicking over his messenger bag. However, I definitely remembered what happened after class.

Edward, Riley, Bree and I met with Larry in his office. It was a mess. It was sloppy before but now it was a pigsty. There were papers everywhere. Books strewn all over the place. Larry's saxophone was open on his couch and it was irreparably damaged. The keys were ripped from the instrument, the bell was bent and twisted and there was a foot-sized ding in the back of the horn. While the situation with our grades was reprehensible, I couldn't help but feel sorry for Larry and the damage he still had to deal with. I intertwined my fingers with Edward's and nestled closer to him. Bree was doing the same with Riley. It appeared that they were dating.

"I'm sorry about the mess. I focused most of my attention on finding the missing work and not cleaning up. This is tame to what I walked in on," Larry said sadly.

"What's going to happen to our grades, Larry?" Riley asked.

"There has never been a situation like this ever in Emerson history. I've discussed the situation with Dean Volturi and President Volturi. I fought for all of you. It is not right, nor is it fair for me to make you re-do all of your assignments that are missing from the grade book. Here's what was in the grade book that I recovered from James' computer," he said as passed out progress reports.

## La Cantante

Edward and I looked at our grade sheets and all the major projects that we had turned in were missing. The in-class work was graded and input into the grade book as were the exams. However, our huge Bach Chorale project and transposition project were missing. Those two projects equaled to 50% of our grades. Both Edward and I did very well on it. Upon further inspection of our grades, there some grades that were not accurate. They were mainly on Edward's grade report. Edward took off his messenger bag and pulled out his folder with his work from theory.

"Here Larry. These are the missing assignments that James neglected to put in and a few others that he put the wrong score in the grade book," Edward said curtly. He handed Larry a pile of papers and his grade report. Larry looked over the paperwork and his eyes got as big as saucers.

"If he put in incorrect information in your grades, I can't imagine if he didn't to other people. This is such a huge problem," Larry said, pulling his hands through his hair. "Do you all of you have your work that has been graded and returned to you?"

I reached into my messenger bag and pulled out all of my assignments that I ever turned into Larry or James. Riley and Bree did the same.

"Can I keep these assignments so I can adjust your grades accordingly?" Larry haggardly asked. We all nodded. Riley and Bree turned to leave, as they had a class that they needed to get to.

Edward linked his fingers with mine and began pulling me to the door. As we were about to leave, I turned and faced Larry. "Do you need any help? I don't have a class right now and neither does Edward. We're more than willing to assist you. This is a horrendous situation and you shouldn't have to shoulder it alone," I said sympathetically. Edward nodded and gave Larry a smile. He was still pissed, but it wasn't Larry's fault.

"Thank you, both of you. However, I need to document the damage to my office and I need to address the situation regarding your grades. I appreciate the offer, more than you can imagine. But, I need to do this on my own and with

campus security. I'll see you both tomorrow," Larry said with a sad, but genuine smile.

"If you need any help, please let us know," I said.

Edward and I walked to The Cage in silence. We were too much in shock to really speak. James was a manipulative fucker who screwed us and Larry. It was not right. However, he got his just desserts and lost his position in the university, thankfully. We got to The Cage and we told Emmett what had happened. He was surprised and pissed. However, he was happy that he had a sister and a roommate who were anal and kept everything ever returned to them. After breakfast, Edward walked me to my education class before he went to biochemistry. He told me to remind Eleazar that he was making up his test after biochemistry today and might be late to University Singers.

I got back my philosophy paper and my final reflection from my education professor. I did really well on both of them and my professor said that I had a promising teaching career ahead of me based on my educational philosophy and attention to detail. I met up with Jasper outside of Facinelli and we walked to our psychology class which was in Ripley. We took notes on the exciting Sigmund Freud and the joys of the Ego and Id. Our professor reminded us that our papers for our major project would be due the Monday after Thanksgiving break. We were also to prepare a brief presentation about our research to share on the following two days of class after the paper was due.

Jasper and I walked to Brandon and headed to the rehearsal room. There was a note on the door that we were meeting on the stage today. Our big concert was this weekend and we needed to rehearse with the orchestra for Rutter's *Magnificat* and on the stage for the rest of our pieces. Today, we'd be focusing on our pieces for the second half of the concert. On Wednesday, we'd be working with the orchestra. On Friday, we'd be doing a dress rehearsal before the concert on Saturday. Edward told me that Carlisle and Esme were going to be there. I tried to convince Charlie and Renee to come out but neither could afford it. I managed to finagle Emmett in coming only if I made him my super-duper Bella brownies. I promised I'd make them over Thanksgiving.



## La Cantante

Jasper and I got onto the stage and we found Rose, Alice and Edward talking in the auditorium. Jasper snuck up behind Alice and kissed her neck. Edward, who was facing me, held open his arms and I gratefully took his proffered hug. I always felt so safe in his arms. Eleazar walked on stage and he asked us to get onto the risers, in the same formation that we'd been sitting in for the semester. Eleazar made some minor changes due to some height differences, but we all managed to stay where we were comfortable.

Eleazar warmed us up. We focused our attention on the pieces that we were singing without the orchestra today. Our concert was roughly divided into three sections. The first section was our major work, *Magnificat*. The second section was the 'madrigal' section while they dismantled the orchestra set up and moved the risers forward. The final section was piano and chorus or accapella pieces. The concert would be approximately an hour and half long.

We started with the pieces that Edward and I were conducting. Eleazar gave us approximately twenty minutes for the two pieces. We spot checked a few things and managed to get at least two solid run-throughs with each piece. After our rehearsal with the group, Eleazar stepped in and did some fine tuning of his own pieces. Finally, we ran the final section of the program with both Edward and I conducting, along with Eleazar. We were released from rehearsal, feeling very confident about our pieces.

After our rehearsal, we needed to pick up our dresses for the concert. The ladies were wearing a royal blue dress, with an empire waist. The top part of the dress was satiny and had short sleeves and a scalloped neckline. The skirt portion of the dress was a slight A-line and had a layer of chiffon over the top of the skirt. We would also be assigned a set of pearls and pearl earrings for the concert. The guys were wearing traditional tuxedos. Alice, Rose and I got our dresses and I brought them back to the dorm. Rose and Alice had classes and couldn't get back to Patterson. Alice said that she would hem our dresses if they needed it. Heaven know that I have no idea how to sew. Perhaps I should stay living with Alice. She can help me with my clothes.

*Seriously? Bronze-haired, six-packed, intelligent, green-eyed hottie who WRITES YOU MUSIC or a needle wielding pixie? There's really no choice.*

## La Cantante

You're right. I am definitely moving in with Edward.

xx LC xx

The rest of the week went well. Larry updated and transferred the information to his computer and he filed criminal charges against James for the vandalism that he did to his office. Larry also apologized profusely for the situation with James.

On Thursday, we didn't have Express rehearsal. Felix felt that we needed a break. He said that he would see us after Thanksgiving. We were definitely grateful. Edward and I used the extra time to look for apartments on his laptop. He was absolutely giddy at the fact that I was buckling. I still told him that I was on the fence and that there was no harm in LOOKING. We found a few places that were promising and Edward contacted the real estate agent and we could meet with them to see the apartments. We scheduled a few meetings on Friday after University Singers and a few more on Saturday morning.

While we were looking at the apartments on Edward's computer, my phone rang from my pocket. It was Detective Raisor.

"Hello?"

"Is this Isabella Swan?" Det. Raisor asked.

"Speaking."

"This is Detective Jane Raisor and I'm calling you with some information regarding Seth Clearwater, the photographer you mentioned. Is Edward Cullen with you?"

"Yes, he is. Let me put you on speaker," I said. I fumbled with my phone and turned on speaker phone. "Go ahead, Detective."

"Hello, Mr. Cullen."

"Hello, Detective Raisor. What's this news that you have?" Edward asked.

"We brought in Mr. Clearwater and we confiscated his photography equipment. The pictures that were sent to you were on his computer and on the memory cards for his cameras. He was the person that took your photos. He also said that he sent the pictures to your school address," Detective Raisor explained.

"This is good news, right?" I asked.

"Yes, it is. However, Mr. Cullen, Seth said that you threw a punch at him the night of the Halloween party and is pressing charges against you," Detective Raisor said sadly.

"That is complete bullshit. I never touched him. I got in his face but I never laid a finger on his body," Edward seethed.

"Honestly, the case will not even make it to court. There was no physical documentation of his alleged injuries and we've got numerous witnesses who said that you didn't harm Mr. Clearwater. However, I wanted to make you aware of the situation. I would suggest getting a lawyer, just to be on the safe side. I'm currently not speaking as detective but as a friend, though."

"Thanks. I'll talk to my parents' attorney tomorrow. However, you firmly believe that it won't hold up in court?" Edward asked uncertainly.

"Definitely. The officer who took the complaint scoffed at what he said. It's really not plausible."

"Alright. Have you heard anything about Jacob?" Edward pressed.

"No. As far we've been told by the local police department is that he's still missing. His father has no clue where he's at and neither do his friends and relatives. Not even the supposed sister he's visiting," Detective Raisor surmised.

"Should we be extra careful?" I asked, fear lacing my tone.

## La Cantante

"Yes. Make sure that you are never alone while you are walking on campus. We've also faxed over a copy of Jacob's picture to the campus security office. He's not allowed on campus. Are there any other questions?"

"I don't think so. Edward?"

"No. Thank you for the heads up about these trumped up charges against me," Edward grumbled.

"Nothing will happen, Edward. The judge will throw them out. You've got a clean record and should not be worried. I'll contact you if anything else arises. Good luck," Detective Raisor said.

"Thanks, Detective. We'll talk to you soon," I said. I heard her click off the phone and I ended the call. "I'm so sorry, Edward. This is all my fault."

"Bella, baby. This is not your fault. You have done nothing wrong. Absolutely nothing. Seth is the one with the problem. Jacob is the one with the problem. Not you. Please don't blame yourself for this," Edward pleaded.

I nodded and tucked my chin to my body. Edward gently cupped my face and pulled it up so I could look him in the eyes. "This. Is. Not. Your. Fault. I love you, baby."

"I love you, too. I'm still sorry."

"Bella," Edward warned.

"About the situation and Seth's delusion of grandeur," I clarified.

"I'm going to call my parents and ask for Jenks' phone number," Edward said, taking out his phone.

"Who's Jenks?"

## La Cantante

"My parents' attorney," Edward said as he called his parents. "Hey Mom. Can I ask a favor of you? Can you give me Jenks' phone number?" Edward asked for a pen and paper and I gave it to him. His mom rattled off the number and Edward jotted it down on the paper that I gave him. I'm assuming that Esme asked why he needed the phone number of their attorney and Edward explained the trumped up charges filed against him and he wanted to cover his bases. Esme was very understanding and concerned for Edward and for me.

After our phone call with Detective Raisor, Edward wanted to take me out to dinner and so we headed to McFinnigans. We ate our food and talked about the apartments that we were scheduled to see tomorrow. Edward was very excited and I was thrilled at his enthusiasm.

"Our first appointment is at 1:45 at the apartment complex furthest away. It would be a bit of a hike, if you walked but I'm more than willing to drive you to and from school," Edward said as he tucked into his cheeseburger.

"Edward, I'm glad that you're excited but I'm still on the fence about this whole apartment thing," I said, playing with my salad. "I don't feel right having you pay the rent and utilities of the place and I don't pay anything."

"Bella, it's not like I don't have the money. I want to do this," he pleaded.

"I need to pay for something," I whined.

"Cable. You can pay for the cable," Edward bargained.

"That's what like \$20 a month. That hardly seems fair," I said, rolling my eyes.

"As long as I get to have you all to myself, that's all I need," Edward replied with a crooked grin.

"Okay, let's compromise. I'll pay for the cable, groceries and do the cooking. It's certainly not 'even' but I'll feel like I'm contributing to the household, if I agree to this," I said.

## La Cantante

"That sounds reasonable," Edward conceded.

"Also, if I cook, I'll know that we won't be eating frozen pizza and chicken fingers every night. You so need cooking lessons, Edward," I giggled.

"Will you be my teacher?" Edward asked, quirking a brow.

"If I must," I said, feigning frustration.

"I love you, roomie."

"I haven't committed to anything yet. Keep in mind, I have to tell Charlie. He won't be happy if I tell him that I'm moving out of the dorms and into an apartment with my boyfriend. He might just shoot you," I replied.

"After I meet him after Christmas, he'll love me and will practically push you to move in with me," Edward said confidently.

"Good luck with that, Cullen."

"Even if you don't move in with me, I'm probably still going to lean on getting an apartment. As much fun as the dorms are, I wouldn't mind having my own place without a communal bathroom."

"You won't get any argument from me there. It's better that it's just the three of us in the room using the bathroom, but it's still nasty. Blech!"

Edward and I finished our meal and decided to go see a movie. We had very little homework and we felt that we needed an escape. We texted the rest of the group and they met up with us for a later showing of the latest Adam Sandler film. We headed back to campus and we all headed to bed.

xx LC xx

On Friday, classes were the status quo. The only issue was our rehearsal for University Singers. We were doing a dress rehearsal with the orchestra and the

## La Cantante

rest of the concert on the stage during class. We had to jam-pack the entire concert into an hour time-slot. We managed to get through the whole concert, only breezing over the pieces that the group was most comfortable with.

Afterward, Eleazar had a few announcements, "Ladies and gentleman, a few things about tomorrow. The concert starts at 7. Your call time for the concert is at 5. Please be dressed and ready to go. Ladies, please wear your hair pulled off your faces. Gentleman, please make sure that you wear black socks with your tuxedos. We don't want any Michael Jackson impersonators on stage. We will meet on stage and do a spot check of a few places and run through of Edward and Bella's songs. Are there any questions?"

No one raised their hands and Eleazar dismissed us. We all walked back to the cafeteria and got some lunch. Jasper was really excited because today was 'Egg burger day.' We all looked at him like he was crazy. He proclaimed that it was the best meal that the cafeteria ever cooked.

*Did I mention that Jasper is weird?*

After lunch, Edward and I went back to Patterson. We both wanted to drop off our bags and I wanted to put on a heavier jacket. The weather was quickly getting colder and I didn't want to get sick again. Edward darted up to his room and I went into mine. I dropped my bag by desk and pulled my wallet from the front pocket. I stuffed my wallet into my purse. However, my purse was not where I had left it. I put my purse on my desk chair last night after the movie. When I got it to put my wallet away, it was on my bed.

*That's weird.*

I quickly changed jackets and pulled my purse over my shoulder. Edward walked in and slipped his arms around my waist. I jumped at his touch.

"Whoa, beautiful. It's just me," he said, kissing my neck.

"I know, handsome. I don't know why I was startled," I said, tracing patterns on his strong forearms. "Well, perhaps it's nothing, but last night after the movie, I

## La Cantante

put my purse on my desk. When I went to put my wallet into my purse, it was on my bed. I know I didn't move it."

"Maybe Alice or Rose did. Ask them when we get back," Edward stated simply.

"Works for me. Ready to go check out some apartments?" I said warily.

"I am, but are you?" Edward asked, turning me around in his arms.

"This is a huge step, Edward. When I was younger, I said that I wouldn't move in with a guy unless I was engaged to be married. We're obviously not engaged and since we've just started dating, it's not really on the horizon. I'm just nervous," I said, gazing into his forest green orbs.

"I'm nervous, too. I'm also excited at the possibilities. I know I've said it before, but I'm going to say it again. There may not be a ring on your left finger yet, but rest assured I'm planning on it," Edward said kissing my left ring finger. "You're it for me. I never want anyone else."

"How can you be so positive? We've known each other for less than three months. There is so much that we don't know about each other. We could move in and you could decide that you hate my laundry skills or that you leave the seat up," I said, flustered.

"Bella, seriously? I know that we are in the 'getting to know you' phase of our relationship. However, I'll let you know that you know more about me than most of my family. You fill this huge void in my heart. Also, I'm not sure about you, but whenever I touch you, I still get that tingle, that jolt. It never diminishes. If anything, it's gotten stronger. I'm connected to you in a way that I never thought possible. I love you. I'm in love with you. I never want to be without you, beautiful girl."

"Wow," I mumbled, intelligently.



## La Cantante

"Yeah, wow. You obviously don't see yourself very clearly, Bella. I. Love. You. And. Will. Only. Love. You. For the rest of my life," Edward said, kissing me on my lips. "So, are you ready to go see apartments?"

"Yes, sir. I love you, too, Edward. I'm sorry about my insecurities. It's all of the negative things that Jacob said. They were ingrained in my head for the time we were together and I'm still trying to overcome them," I said, as we walked out of the room.

"Well, it'll be my mission to make sure that you never believe those things ever again. You are the most important part of my life now. Don't you forget it, beautiful."

We walked out into the parking lot of Patterson. It was lightly snowing. Edward opened up the passenger side of his Volvo and I slid into the cold car. Edward quickly went to the other side of the vehicle and turned it. He punched in the address of the first apartment complex into his GPS and we headed off campus. It took us about fifteen minutes, driving, to get to the apartment building. It would be a long trek, if I needed to walk. That already was a tally in the negative column on this place. Edward and I walked up to the leasing office and were greeted by an older woman, wearing a long black wool coat and heels.

"Hello. I'm Renata Garibaldi and I'm the real estate agent assigned to this building. Are you Edward Cullen?" Renata asked.

"Yes. I'm Edward. This is my girlfriend, Isabella Swan," he said shaking Renata's hand. She took a quick gaze up and down of Edward and licked her lips.

*He's mine, lady. I'm the girlfriend. Not you, you cougar!*

Edward snaked his arm around my waist after he shook her hand, or should I say paw. He pressed a kiss to my temple and smiled curtly at her.

## La Cantante

"There are two models in the apartment complex. There's a two bedroom and a three bedroom. Which one would you prefer?" Renata inquired.

"Two bedroom, please," Edward replied.

"Okay. Right this way, then," Renata said as she led us up some stairs. She took out a set of keys and unlocked a door about halfway through the hallway on the second floor. I wrinkled my nose at the smell in the hallway. It was a combination of curry, sweat socks, heavy duty disinfectant and something I couldn't place. It was nasty. Renata unlocked the apartment and led us inside.

We were greeted by another strong odor, like something had died in the apartment or a litter box that needed to be changed desperately. Edward pulled up his hand and covered his mouth. His eyes were watering. He looked at me and abruptly shook his head no.

"Renata, I don't want to waste your time, but the place is not for us," Edward said. "There's no security in place. Also, there's a stench here that is making me sick to my stomach."

"If I could just show you around inside, I'm certain that you'll both love the floor plan," Renata tried in desperation.

"No, thank you. We'll call you if we need your services, but not right now," Edward said with a tone of finality. He squeezed my side and led me out of the smelly apartment. We almost sprinted down the hall and down the stairs to fresh air. As soon as we got outside, we both inhaled the cold air. "I seriously was going to hurl if I stayed in that place any longer. It smelled like something died in there."

"It was gross, Edward. Please tell me the next place is a little better?"

"Yeah. This was not my first choice. However, I wanted to make sure. The second appointment scheduled is in a secured building, with a doorman. I actually prefer that one because of the security measures and the underground parking garage. It's more money, but it'll be worth it. Come on, beautiful."

## La Cantante

Edward led me back to his car and we drove a bit closer to campus, about five minutes away from stinky central. We walked up to the leasing office. We needed to be buzzed into the building, which I automatically liked. We went down a long, sleek hallway to the office and were greeted by a middle-aged man.

"Hello. I'm Alistair Sympson. Everyone calls me Al. Welcome to Dorwood Hills Apartments. Please come in and have a seat," Al said with a warm smile.

We settled into a pair of seats in front of a small wooden desk. He took out a pad of paper and wrote down today's date. "So, can I get your names?"

"I'm Edward Cullen and this is my girlfriend, Isabella Swan."

"Great. Are you looking for a one bedroom, two bedroom, three bedroom or a loft?" Alistair asked.

"Two bedroom is preferable," Edward replied, lacing his fingers with mine.

"Are you both students at the university?"

"Yes."

"Fantastic. Let me tell you a little bit about the apartment complex before I show you the different floor plans. Our rent starts at \$600 a month for a loft and goes up to \$2,200 a month for a three bedroom. Most of our apartments were recently remodeled. They had new carpeting put in, new cabinetry, stainless steel appliances, new bathroom fixtures and a fresh coat of paint. Some apartments are higher end and have wood flooring and granite counter tops. However, they are in the two bedroom and three bedroom models. For a two bedroom apartment, they start at \$850 and go up to \$1,100. How much are you looking to spend in rent?"

"That doesn't really matter. I have some money saved up and can afford a nicer place," Edward explained.

## La Cantante

"Okay. Good to know. With your rent, you also get heating, electric, and water. You are responsible for your own phone, cable and internet hook ups. Do you have any questions?" Al asked.

Edward looked at me expectantly. I shrugged. Edward gave my knee a squeeze and shook his head no.

"Well, let me show the two bedroom floor plans first," Al said, taking out a binder. He flipped the pages and found the floor plans for the two bedroom apartments. He handed the binder to Edward and I. We both looked at the plans and we both agreed on one. Edward pointed it out and Al beamed. "Excellent choice. That is the more expensive floor plan, but it's a really nice apartment. Has a lot of storage, gourmet kitchen, master suite and the spare bedroom is quite nice as well. Do you want to do a walk through?"

We both nodded emphatically. Alistair picked up a set of keys and escorted us into the hallway. We walked to a set of elevators and it took us up to the fourth floor. We got out of the elevator and took a short walk to the apartment. Alistair unlocked the door and ushered us inside.

When we walked in, we were greeted with a short hallway. To the right was a doorway into the kitchen. The kitchen had all stainless steel appliances and granite counter tops that were black and very opulent. The floor was a deep cherry as were the cabinets. There was an area for a small table and chairs. There was a window over the sink and by the area for the table and chairs. We walked out of the kitchen and continued down the hallway. Further down on our right was the family room. It was a large room that could easily fit two full sized couches. The family room had a plush beige carpet on the floor and a fireplace opposite the patio. We walked back through the family room and moved down another hallway. There was a small bathroom to the left with a shower stall and toilet. Across from that was a decent sized room that could be used as a spare bedroom or an office. Further down the hallway was the entrance to the master suite. This room was nearly the size of the family room. It had a ton of windows and it was nice and airy. There were two doors in the master suite. One was the huge walk in closet and the other was to the bathroom. The bathroom boasted a Jacuzzi tub, shower and double vanity. The

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bathroom had a ton of cabinet space and counters were also granite. The floors were a slate tile and it complemented the lighter cherry wood cabinetry. Alistair led us back down the main hallway and showed us the attached laundry room.

I loved the apartment. I could imagine living here with Edward. I could imagine decorating the rooms and cooking in the kitchen. I could imagine making love to Edward in the bathtub, in the shower, everywhere. My face broke into a large smile and I felt Edward by my side.

"You like it, don't you?" he purred in my ear. I nodded. "Alistair, can you give us a moment so we can discuss?"

"Of course. I'll just be outside. Holler if you need me," he said with a grin. He knew he had a sale. He scurried out of the apartment and as soon as the door clicked, Edward's lips crashed onto mine. He kissed me until I was breathless. He pulled away and his eyes were dark with desire.

"What was that for, handsome?" I breathed.

"I want you, Bella. I know that we can't do it here, yet. However, I can see you in this apartment. I can see us in this apartment doing many things," he cooed. I whimpered and looked into his blazing eyes.

"I love the apartment, Edward. I truly do. I just don't want to make a rash decision," I reasoned, letting my logical part of my brain override my impulsive side.

"Neither do I, but this place is the best one out of the apartments that we've researched online. The apartments that are scheduled for tomorrow would be more similar to what we just came from. I would feel more comfortable here. I would feel more comfortable with YOU being here with all of the security."

"Holy shit. I can't believe I'm saying this," I said, trying to reign in my anxiety, "Let's do it."

"Really?" Edward asked, his eyes twinkling.

"Really."

He let out a whoop and wrapped his arms around my waist. He pulled me into a hug and spun me around. He gently put me on my feet and peppered my face with sweet, loving kisses. "I love you, Isabella Swan! Come on. Let's tell Alistair that we're doing this."

Edward entwined his fingers with mine and we walked out into the hallway where Alistair was waiting. Edward's handsome face broke into a huge grin and Alistair reached over to shake his hand. He walked us back down to the leasing office and we began filling out the paperwork. Because we were first time renters, we had to pay double the security deposit. Edward had already contacted the housing office from Emerson and informed them that he was not going to be in the dorms for second semester. They refunded his money and he used that as the security deposit. Alistair also ran a credit check on both of us. We both were in the clear. After about an hour and a half, we had an apartment. We were scheduled to move in on January 5th. Edward said that he would get the furniture for the place with his parents' help. They already were okay with his decision with getting an apartment and were honestly surprised when signed up to live in the dorms this year. Esme was honestly excited to decorate Edward and my apartment.

As we were driving back to campus, I decided that I needed to tell my parents. Well, Charlie at least. I dialed up his number and waited for him to pick up. Edward gave my hand a squeeze as I looked at him in a panic.

"Swan."

"Hi, Daddy."

"Bells! This is a pleasant surprise! How are you doing, baby girl?" Charlie asked. He sounded tired.

"I'm good, Daddy. I miss you," I said quietly. "I've got some news."

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"Good news or bad news?" Charlie asked warily.

"Um, both. I'll start with the bad news. It turns out that Seth was the one taking the pictures of Edward and I. They found the pictures on his computer and memory cards from his camera. He also confessed to sending the pictures to us," I began.

"That's good news, Bella!"

"I'm not done, yet, Dad. Seth also said that Edward punched him at a party and said that he was going to press charges," I finished, sadly. I squeezed Edward's knee and he gave me a tight smile.

"That's a load of crap. Did Edward get a lawyer?"

"Yes, he did. So, that's the bad news. I've also got some good news. Or at least, I think it's good news," I continued.

"You don't sound very excited, Bells. You sound like someone killed your best friend."

I blew out a breath and pinched the bridge of my nose. Edward chuckled. I picked up that habit from him. "Edward got an apartment off campus."

"Good for him. Is it in a safe neighborhood? Have security?" Charlie pressed.

"Yes, on both counts. There's more."

"Okay. What else is there?" Charlie countered.

"I'm moving in with him," I said in a rush.

"WHAT?"

I pulled the phone away from my ear and listened to my dad carry on with his tirade. I faintly heard 'knocked up,' 'living in sin,' 'not thinking,' and many

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more. When the screaming died down, I put the phone back to my ear, "Daddy?"

"Don't you 'Daddy' me. I forbid this, Isabella Marie. You just met this boy and you're moving in with him? This is ludicrous. You're not pregnant are you?"

"No, Dad. I'm not pregnant. You can't forbid me to live with Edward. I'm an adult and I can make these decisions," I snapped.

"How can you afford this apartment?"

"I'm getting a refund on my housing costs from my tuition. That money is going toward rent. Dad, Edward is a good man. He's kind and attentive. He takes care of me. I feel safe with him. He loves me."

"Let me talk to Edmund," Charlie barked.

"It's Edward, Daddy. EDWARD! E-D-W-A-R-D. Jeez."

"Okay, let me talk to *EDWARD*."

I passed the phone to Edward and he held it up to his ear. "Hello? Chief Swan?"

I listened with rapt attention to Edward and my father's conversation. Edward explained to Charlie about his concerns about staying on campus. He also said that the security in the building was much better than the security in the dorm, especially with Jacob's whereabouts not known. After about five minutes, Edward was laughing with Charlie. My eyes grew as big as saucers at their interaction. "Thanks, Charlie. Here's Bella."

Edward handed me back the phone and I dropped it as he gave it to me. I quickly picked it up and went back to Charlie. "Dad?"

"Okay, Edward is not an idiot. However, I don't like the fact that you made this decision without consulting me, Isabella."



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"Sorry, Daddy. However, you're okay with this?"

"Reluctantly okay. We're going to discuss this when you get home for Christmas and Edward and I will be discussing it when he comes out to visit you after Christmas. If you're living with this boy, there needs to be a few ground rules. We'll talk about them later. I love you, baby girl."

"I love you, too, Daddy. However, I'm not your baby girl anymore."

"No, you're not. You're growing up. Too fast," Charlie said sadly. "Call me, soon. Give my love to Emmett."

"Will do, Daddy. Talk to you later," I said quietly.

"Bye, Bells."

I hung up the phone and looked out the car window. I had just realized that we were not back on campus. We were on the highway. "Where are we going?"

"La Bella Italia. We're going out to celebrate our first place together," Edward replied, bringing hand up to his lips.

"How long until we get there?"

"About a half hour. Why?" Edward asked. I quirked an eyebrow and my hand snaked over the console of the car went for his crotch. I palmed his cock with my hand and he swerved on the road. "Christ, Bella! What are you doing?"

"Road head," I said seductively. My hand gently caressed his dick through his jeans. I could feel him get bigger against my hand. He took a furtive glance in my direction. His eyes were wild and his breathing was growing erratic. With my fingers, I popped the top button of his jeans and slowly lowered the zipper. I reached my hand into his boxers and wrapped my fingers around his shaft. Edward's breath hitched.

"Fuck."

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"Not yet, baby. We'd get into a car crash if we did that while driving," I said with a grin. I gently pumped his engorged member and pulled it out of his boxers. I unbuckled my seatbelt and leaned across the console. I pressed a kiss to the tip of his dick. He groaned. I pulled the head of his penis into my mouth and I swirled my tongue. With my hand, I caressed his soft skin. It felt like silk over a steel rod. I opened my mouth and drew him deeper. I began bobbing my head and sucking on his cock. One of Edward's hands, gently brushed my hair from my face. He looked down at me and his lips were parted. I lightly dragged my teeth along his shaft.

"God, this is so hot. It's unreal," Edward rasped.

I withdrew my mouth. I continued pumping with my hand, "It's real baby. I want taste you. I feel you squirt down my throat," I replied huskily.

"Keep doing that and I will," he growled.

"Gladly, handsome. Keep your eyes on the road," I reminded. I drew him quickly into my mouth, as deep as I could. I felt the tip of his cock hit the back of my throat. I relaxed my jaw and he went even deeper. I gently massaged his balls and I could feel him get harder in my mouth. I swirled my hand around his shaft and continued bobbing my head, moving faster with each pump.

"Bella...God...I'm gonna...!" I wrapped my lips tighter around his dick and nibbled along the head. His hips bucked and I hit my head on the steering wheel, however, I never lost contact with his cock. I twisted, swirled and pumped my head and my hands. I felt Edward's cock twitch and a warm salty spray covered my throat. I lapped all of Edward's cum. I put him back into his boxers and covered his undone jeans with his shirt. "Holy shit, Bella."

"You like?"

"I more than just like. No one has ever done that to me before," he breathed.

"Well, I popped your road head cherry," I giggled.

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"Damn. How did I get so lucky? I love you, so much beautiful."

"I love you too, baby. I don't really want dinner now."

"Me neither. I need to get my Bella fix," Edward growled. He exited the highway and we headed back to Emerson. Thankfully, my room was unoccupied and he had his dinner. Me.

xx LC xx

We told everybody about our housing situation during breakfast the next morning. Alice already knew. She had a 'feeling.' Emmett had a similar reaction to what Charlie did. However, I managed to calm him down and get to understand why we made the decision. Emmett thought it was because Edward wanted a free ticket to sex, nonstop. I smacked him and told him that was not the reason. At least not Edward's reason. Emmett paled and the rest of the table broke into laughter. Edward gave me a wicked grin and suggestive wiggle of his brows.

*What can I say? I'm insatiable. My boyfriend is sex on legs.*

Edward had called and canceled the other appointments that we had scheduled for today. We spent the day just relaxing and studying. I have a psychology test on Monday. Jasper and I were quizzing each other for the test. Edward was working on some calculus homework. Then he had to do his biochemistry lab report. About three, I went downstairs to get ready for our concert. Alice and Rose said that they would 'poof' me. I had showered that morning and all I needed to get done was my hair and makeup. Rose worked on my hair, while Alice did my makeup. After they finished playing 'Bella Barbie' I put on my University Singers dress and jewelry. Rose and Alice finished getting themselves ready and we waited for Edward and Jasper to head down to our room. We were all driving in Edward's car. After the concert, Carlisle and Esme were taking all of us out to eat. About a quarter to five, Jasper knocked on the door and we headed out to the car with the guys. I had given Emmett his ticket at breakfast and he was going to be sitting with Carlisle and Esme.

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We got to Brandon and Edward parked his car in the lot behind it. We headed up to the rehearsal room where the rest of the group was located. At five sharp, Eleazar walked in, wearing a crisp tuxedo with tails and white vest and tie, and began warm ups. He ran some problem spots in *Magnificat*. He then turned over the podium to Edward and I. Edward went first. He ran his piece. He had improved tremendously since we first started this experiment. He was confident, well-spoken and concise in his directions. His conducting pattern was very clear and it was easy to follow. He gave us a few notes but he was pleased with our practice. I walked up to the podium next and motioned for the soloists to walk forward. We held auditions two weeks ago. Ben got the bass solo and Edward got the tenor. There was a bit of a ruckus that Edward got the solo, but I had a blind form that I filled out. When the guys auditioned, they were in a room and I was in the hall. I didn't see who was auditioning, they were just numbers. I ran my piece and we made some corrections, but I was pleased.

After I ran my piece, Eleazar asked the madrigal singers to come to the front and rehearse in front of the choir. I provided the pitches with my freakish perfect pitch ability. We all took turns with entrances and exits. The madrigal singers really had grown as a group and Eleazar informed us that we would become a permanent fixture of the University Singers as a small vocal ensemble. We would have the opportunity to sing more challenging pieces and it would be more student led. It was quite an achievement for those of us involved in the group.

We finished our rehearsal in front of the larger group and Eleazar took his place on the podium. He gave us a few words of wisdom. "Ladies and gentlemen, you have worked very hard these past few weeks with these songs. I'm incredibly pleased with how well you are sounding as a group. I'm honored to work as your director. I'd like to express my gratitude to all of my section leaders, Tyler Crowley, Edward Cullen, Tia Mogley, and Isabella Swan. You've made my job easier in your ability to lead sectionals and step in my absence. I also would like to thank and congratulate our two student conductors, Edward Cullen and Isabella Swan. You've both grown as musicians and as directors in the past few weeks. What originally began as an 'experiment' has turned into one the most cherished musical memories I'll ever

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have. I will definitely do the student conductor experiment again. Thank you two for being my guinea pigs. My only fear is that everyone will pale in comparison to your attention to detail and professionalism. I also want to thank our fantastic accompanist and wonderful wife, Dr. Carmen Santiago. Thank you for your hard work and I love you very much. Finally, thank you all of you. You are amazing musicians and I look forward to hearing our concert tonight. Are there any questions or comments?"

Tia tentatively raised her hand. Eleazar gestured to her. Tia stood up shakily on her crutches. "It's comment. I want to say to both Edward and Bella that you both have done awesome in the preparation of your pieces. Edward, you were so attached to the piano and afraid to stand on the podium at the beginning. Now, your confidence rivals Eleazar's. You did good, man. Bella, I know that I was overly harsh to you at the beginning of the semester. Part of it was jealousy over an underclassmen getting all the recognition and the other part was fear of the unknown. However, you are fantastic musician, conductor and singer. By just being a part of the group, you've added to our sound and made it better. I apologize for my behavior at the beginning of the year and I hope you forgive me. Let's give both Bella and Edward a round of applause for doing what many of us can't! Fantastic job!"

The choir all began their applause. Jasper, Rose and Alice all stood up and that began the cascade of a standing ovation. Both Edward and I turned a bright shade of pink. I wanted to hide behind him. However, we both smiled graciously at our classmates and colleagues. Edward grasped my hand and laced his fingers with mine. He pressed a kiss to my temple and murmured in my ear, "*Il mio cantante bello. L'amo così molto.*"

"*Poiché l'amo, il mio ragazzo dotato,*" I whispered back. I gave him a chaste kiss on his lips and he smiled at me. The applause died down and the class sat back in the chairs.

"I couldn't have said it better myself. I'm so incredibly proud of both you. However, we do need to get ready for our performance. We should head down onto the stage. Please remember, folders in the left hand and don't lock your knees," Eleazar reminded with a sardonic grin. He gave a quick gesture and the

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last row of singers stood up and walked out of the room. We all filed out until we were lined up right outside the stage. The curtains rose and we began filing onto the risers. Eleazar was the final person on the stage and he gave a gentlemanly bow to the audience. He then gestured to the oboe player who played the note to tune the instruments. He quickly tuned the orchestra and then stood on the podium. He raised his arms and we brought our folders up. With a flick of the wrist and a breath, Eleazar cued the orchestra and our concert had begun.

We started our concert with the major work, John Rutter's *Magnificat*. It required a few soloists. The upper classmen vocal majors were offered the solos and they did a fantastic job. They were not easy pieces, especially for college students. We performed the *Magnicat* and it went smoothly. After we finished the major work, Eleazar gave another bow and indicated to the choir and the orchestra. The concert mistress stood up and shook Eleazar's hand. He smiled warmly at her. He gave a nod and the curtains closed.

The madrigal singers all stepped out of formation and we walked in front of the curtains. Eleazar introduced us as the small vocal ensemble, demonstrating some typical old English madrigals in the traditional style. He also shared who we were and what our majors were. After his brief speech, he nodded to me and I gave the first pitch. Edward led in the group and we performed our five pieces. "Fum, Fum, Fum" was a little fast but overall we did a solid job on our madrigal songs. We all bowed and headed backstage to get back into our choral formation. The choir risers had been moved forward and the orchestra equipment had been removed from the stage.

The curtains rose again and we filed onto the risers. The grand piano was in center stage and Eleazar's podium was behind it. Eleazar had changed his jacket to a regular tuxedo jacket. He gave a bow to the audience and gestured to Carmen. She nodded her head to the audience as well. We sang our first two pieces. They were pretty straight-forward. After our second piece, it was my turn to conduct. I nervously walked to the front and up to the podium. I opened my music and nodded to the soloists, who stepped forward. Edward was to my left and Ben was to my right. They both stood on the floor in front of the risers. I held my hands up and gave the choir a smile and cued in Carmen. When it

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came time for the first solo, Edward, I looked at him and gave him a wink. His features lit up and his velvety voice filled the auditorium. I got goose bumps as I listened to him sing his solo. I cued in the rest of the guys and we sang through the first verse. The second verse came through and Ben did extremely well. Not as well as Edward, but it was good. We performed the second verse and moved to the key change section. I decided to play with this section and I finally got it to where I wanted it. The guys followed me perfectly, doing everything that I had planned out in my head. We finished the song with a flourish. I cut them off and beamed proudly at them. I stepped off the podium and gestured to the men. I indicated to Edward and Ben and they both bowed. I gestured to Carmen and she nodded her head. I took a small bow and walked back to my place in the choir. Edward walked past me, squeezing my elbow and giving me a wink.

Edward stepped onto the podium and he gave us a gorgeous smile. He mouthed to us to have fun and then he brought up his hands. We held our folders in our left hands as he wanted us to be memorized. Edward looked at Carmen and gave his prep and she started. Edward raised his brows and gave us a clear entrance and we came in confidently. With his conducting pattern, he showed us where to breathe, what articulations he wanted and dynamics. As Edward continued through the piece, his confidence grew. By the end, I could tell that he was hooked. His place was on the podium and he finally realized it. He cut us off and gave us a look of triumph. He stepped off the podium and indicated to Carmen. He then gave a sweeping gesture to us and he took a deep bow.

*That's my man. I'm so proud of him.*

We finished the concert and went phenomenally well. Eleazar was beaming at our performance. He walked over to Carmen and he gave her a hug. He pointed to Edward and I and he signaled for us to come and join him. When we went down and he enveloped Edward into a hug and then shook his hand. He did the same to me. He clasped both of our hands and we all bowed together. Eleazar gave a gentle head nod and the curtains were pulled shut.

"You both did wonderfully. I couldn't have asked for a better performance. I'm so proud," Eleazar said, his voice cracking. He held open his arms and Edward

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and I were pulled into a joint hug. We stepped away and Eleazar gave us a smile. He then grabbed his music off the podium and followed the group off stage.

Edward and I looked at each other. I took a deep breath. Edward wrapped his arms around me and lifted me off the ground. "Bella, you kicked ass. I'm so proud of you. I love you so much," Edward said into my curled hair.

I fisted my hands into his own unruly locks and breathed, "You have no idea how seeing you on the podium does to me, handsome. You are so confident. So sexy. I'm so proud that you're mine. I love you."

Edward gently put me down and his eyes were dark. He quirked a brow and crashed his lips against mine. "As you're mine, beautiful. All mine. I'm never going to let you go." He held me tightly against his chest and I ran my hands under his jacket.

"Me neither, baby."

"Let's go get some dinner and celebrate our first concert as conductors. I'm totally hooked."

"I can tell, Edward. I love you."

"I love you, too."

He twined his fingers with mine and we grabbed our folders to meet our friends and family to celebrate.

**A/N: Beastly chapter. I was going to split it up, but the flow seemed to work. If you want, leave a review. They make me happy. Almost as happy as getting an apartment with Edward.**

**Up next, celebratory dinner, Breaking Midnight pre-Thanksgiving day party, some citrus...perhaps on stage?**



**University Singers Program**

**Section I - John Rutter's *Magnificat***

**Section II - 'Madrigal Section'**

**Psallite**

**Lo, How a Rose Ere Blooming**

**Masters in the Hall**

**Sicut Cervus**

**Fum, Fum, Fum**

**Section III - Traditional Choral Stuff**

**Set Me as a Seal**

**What Sweeter Music**

**River in Judea (Bella conducts)**

**Listen to the Angels Shouting (Edward conducts)**

**Coventry Carol**

**Festival Sanctus**

**O Come O Come Emmanuel**

**Breath of Heaven (Mary's Song)**

**Irish Blessing**

## La Cantante

### ***Translations:***

*Il mio cantante bello. L'amo così molto* - My lovely singer. I love you so much.

*Poiché l'amo, il mio ragazzo dotato* - As I love you, my handsome boyfriend.

# Celebrations and Such

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 37: Celebrations and Such

### EPOV

After our concert, Bella and I headed out to the reception area of Brandon Hall. We met up with my parents, Emmett and the rest of the group. Alice was bouncing on her toes while Jasper was trying to restrain her. Rose and Emmett were standing, their hands were linked together. My parents were arm in arm with proud smiles on their faces.

"Congratulations, Edward!" Esme said giving me a hug and kissing my cheek. She took a step away and rubbed the lipstick off my face. "Congratulations to you, too, Bella." Esme gave her a warm hug. "You both were so poised and confident up there. It was amazing to see."

"Yes, congratulations to the both of you," Carlisle responded, giving me a hug and Bella a kiss on the cheek. "I can see now your love for music. Edward, you blew me away. Elizabeth would be so proud of you."

"Thanks, Dad. That means a lot to me," I said, my voice thick with emotion. Bella placed her tiny hand in mine and gave it a squeeze. I looked down at her and gave her a watery smile, as tears threatened to spill onto my face.

Bella stood on her tiptoes and brushed her lips against my ear, "You did so well, Edward. Enjoy it. I love you." She moved away and brushed her hand across my cheek. I instinctively leaned into her touch, relishing the feeling she gave me as she touched me. The calm her hand on my face gave me.

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"Isabelly! Oh my goodness! You kicked ass up there! I never knew that you could do that. I'm so amazed," Emmett boomed. He wrapped his beefy arms around my girl and lifted her. She squealed and smacked him on his back.

"Put me down, you oaf," Bella giggled. Emmett plopped her down on the floor and gave her an impish smile. "Thank you for coming, Emmy."

"I wouldn't have missed it. I gotta support both of my girls," Emmett replied.

"Both your girls?" Bella asked.

"Yep. I asked Rose if she would consider being exclusive and she said yes," Emmett retorted.

Bella and Alice turned to Rosalie with their eyes wide with surprise.

"What? It's not like it wouldn't have happened," Rose stated simply. "Your brother is sweet. Also, not to mention, he's hot, too."

"Congratulations to you as well, Rosalie and Emmett," Esme said with a huge grin. "More reasons to celebrate! Come on, we've made reservations for us at Costa's. It's a Greek restaurant in town. You'll all like it."

We all filed out of the auditorium and headed to our cars. Jasper and Alice rode with my parents. Emmett and Rosalie drove with Bella and me in the Volvo. We headed off campus and into town to the restaurant. I followed Carlisle. He pulled up to the restaurant and used the valet for his Mercedes. I followed suit and decided to do the same with the Volvo. I got the ticket from the attendant and placed it into my jacket pocket. We all went into the restaurant and were led to a small dining room in the back of the restaurant. The décor of the restaurant was very rustic with accents of royal blue and white. It looked like a Greek villa. It was very charming.

We all settled into the table and opened our menus. We discussed what we wanted to eat. My parents got a wide variety of Greek appetizers: saganaki, taramosalata, lemon soup and Greek salad for starters. We all decided to try

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some different things from the menu and share our food. The waiter served our appetizers and scuttled away.

"So, Edward, I heard that you got an apartment?" Carlisle asked.

I took a sip of my water and nodded. "Yeah. It's in Dorwood Hill Apartment complex. It's really nice. The square footage is about 1600 square feet. Two bedrooms and two bathrooms with a storage facility. It's a secure building with a doorman. It also has an underground parking garage. We have two parking spots, but will only be using one. We move in on January 5th."

"Sounds really nice. What's the rent?" Carlisle pressed.

"\$1,100 a month. That includes assessments, water, heating and electricity. On Monday, I'm setting up everything for cable, telephone and internet," I explained

"Bella, you're moving in with Edward, right?" Esme asked kindly.

"Yes, Esme. I'm very excited. As much as I love rooming with Alice and Rosalie, it'll be nice to move in with Edward. The dorm experience has been fun, but it does have its challenges," Bella said with a grin.

*If you only knew what those challenges were.*

"That's fantastic! Over the Thanksgiving break we'll have to discuss decorating options. We'll make the apartment look fantastic. Consider it our Christmas present to both of you. We'll get your furniture and necessities for your new place," Esme gushed.

"Oh, Esme. That's too much! You really don't have to do that," Bella said as she blushed.

"Oh, nonsense. Who am I going to spend money on besides my children? It'll be my pleasure to decorate your apartment," Esme chastised.

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*Soon, Bella will be your daughter-in-law, Esme. It's only a matter of time.*

Bella shot me a glance, filled with apprehension. I smiled at her reassuringly. "Thanks, Mom. It means more to us than you can imagine."

"Not a problem, Edward. I'm happy that you found a place. I just want to make sure I capture both your personalities in the décor. I have some ideas, but I want to run them past Bella over your Thanksgiving break. I'll have some sketches drawn up and we'll discuss them. When are you planning on heading home for Thanksgiving?" Esme questioned.

"Breaking Midnight has a show on Tuesday evening. This was a last minute change. We won't be able to head out until Wednesday morning," I clarified.

"That's okay. Bella, I got those recipes that you sent. I'm looking forward to your broccoli casserole, sweet potato casserole and Bella Brownies. My mouth is watering at the thought!" Esme said, rubbing her stomach.

"Those are all family recipes. However, the brownies are payment. Emmett said he would only come to the concert tonight if I made my Bella Brownies," Bella retorted.

"Your brownies are the shit, Isabelly. I still would have come to your concert, but the brownies are an added bonus," Emmett said with a grin.

"Whatever, Em," Bella giggled.

"Well, Bella. I'll make sure to have all of the necessary ingredients. I'm going grocery shopping on Tuesday evening. We should be all ready to go for preparations on Wednesday. This is going to be so much fun," Esme squealed.

*Really, Mom? Squealing? You're in your late forties.*

"So, how was your trip to Toronto?" Carlisle asked Bella, Rose and I.

## La Cantante

"It was a lot of fun. Busy but fun," Rose replied. "We left on Thursday and got into Toronto by 9. Friday, we were given the chance to explore the city. Saturday we had our performances. We competed in the morning and got into the semi-finals. Unfortunately, our performance at the semi-finals was not strong enough to move us to the finals. We did stay to watch the final competition and the groups were really good."

"We got the website with the pictures. Edward forwarded it on to both Esme and me. There were some really good pictures and it looked like a fun time," Carlisle said as he sipped his wine.

We finished our meals and enjoyed some desserts. Esme and the girls made plans for Thanksgiving. Alice was hell-bent on going out shopping first thing on Friday. Bella cringed at the thought. She pleaded with her eyes to save her. I gave her a chaste kiss and said I'd think of something.

We piled into the cars and headed back to campus. We were pulling up to Patterson when Bella squeaked.

"Everything alright, Bella?" Emmett asked.

"I left my folder and messenger bag in Brandon. Crap," she grumbled.

"I'll drop off Rose and Emmett and we'll drive up to Brandon to get it. No big deal, beautiful," I suggested.

"Okay. Thanks, Edward," she breathed.

I pulled my car up to the front entrance of Patterson and dropped Emmett and Rose off. They gave a wave and headed inside. I drove back out into traffic and went up to Brandon. I pulled into the parking lot. I hopped out of the car and went to Bella's door. I gallantly opened it for her and laced my fingers with hers. I grabbed my keys from my pocket and unlocked the doors to Brandon.

"Where did you leave your stuff?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"My bag is in the choir room and I think I left my folder on stage," Bella responded quietly. We headed upstairs to grab her bag. I slung it over my shoulders and we went downstairs to the stage. I unlocked the stage doors and turned on the work lights. The stage was bathed in a harsh glow of fluorescent lighting. Bella's folder was on the choir risers. I ambled over to the risers and slipped the folder into her bag. Bella moved from the wings of the stage and walked to the piano. Her small hand caressed the huge instrument. She sat down at the piano bench and raised the lid. Her fingers tenderly ran over the keys, playing a set of scales. She turned her body and looked at me.

"Play for me?"

I could not deny her anything. I took off her bag and placed it by the piano. She moved over on the bench and I sat down next to her. "What do you want to hear?"

"That song you were humming, that you're writing for Breaking Midnight," Bella suggested.

"It's not really done. I've only played around with it," I said, running my hand through my hair.

"Please, Edward?" she asked, looking up at me through her lashes. She pulled her lip into her teeth and ran her hands up and down my arm.

I nodded and turned to face the piano. I closed my eyes and let the music flow from my body. As I was playing, Bella was humming some harmonies. She got up off the piano bench and pulled out her staff paper. She furiously began scribbling as I was playing. I heard the pencil stop and I looked at Bella. Her eyes were closed and her fingers were moving in the air. I stopped playing.

"Why did you stop, Edward?"

"I can see the gears moving in your head. I want to hear what you have written down," I said, getting up off the bench and gently pushing her into the seat. She sat down with a huff and began playing what I had just played, adding a few



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different touches and the harmonies that she was humming. Her fingers moved effortlessly on the piano keys, with a graceful touch. She came to an ending and turned to face me.

"Well? What do you think?"

"I think I want you," I growled.

"Here? On stage?" Bella squeaked.

"There's no one here. It's just us and the piano," I said as I knelt in front of her. I shifted her body so she was facing me. I reached up and cupped her face with my hands. I brushed my lips against hers. An electric current shot through my body and I gasped. I assumed it happened to Bella as she did the same. She pulled away from me and her eyes were blazing. "Did you feel that, beautiful?"

She nodded and thrust her fingers through my hair, forcefully pulling me closer to her. Her breathing was ragged and her chest was heaving. She crashed her lips against mine and her tongue moved into my mouth. My arms moved around her waist and I pulled her closer to me. Our tongues fought for dominance and I loved this aggressive side of Bella. She could be so coy and unsure of herself. However, there were moments that shocked me and this was one of them. I moved my lips away from hers and pressed open mouth kisses down the column of her throat.

"Oh, Edward," she moaned. Her sounds went straight to my cock. My zipper was ready to burst at her moans and whimpers. I stood up and moved Bella with me. I pulled away and gently shut the lid of the piano and closed the music stand on top. I gently picked Bella up and put her on top of the piano. Her eyes were as large as saucers. I ran my hands up her legs, underneath her skirt of her dress.

"I need you, Bella. Please," I pleaded, as I nibbled along her ear. My hands moving closer to her core. "I want to have you. Feel this." I took her hand and placed it on my straining cock. "This is all for you. I've wanted you since the concert, since you were on the podium."

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Bella whimpered and closed her eyes. I kissed her lips, licking her bottom lip. Her mouth opened and I thrust my tongue into her warm mouth. Her hips were moving and I could feel her legs get restless. She removed her hand from my cock and reached for the lapels of my tuxedo jacket. She pushed the jacket off my shoulders. I moved the hem of her dress above her knees. She leaned on her hands and I shifted the dress above her hips. Bella gasped as her ass hit the cold wood of the piano. I hooked my thumbs on her panties and brought them down her long legs. I gently nudged Bella back and spread her legs with my hands.

"Edward. I can't believe we're doing this," she moaned. "Don't stop."

"HMMMMMMMM," I mumbled against the soft skin of her inner thigh. I licked and nibbled closer to her core. She was leaning on her elbows, looking at me. Her brown eyes were nearly black with desire. Her lids were hooded and her mouth was partially open. She licked her lips and threw her head back. I looked at her, splayed out on the piano, her pink, wet pussy bare for me. I leaned in and pressed a kiss to her slick folds. She groaned and her hips bucked. I ran my tongue up and down the length of her slit. "You taste so good, beautiful. I could live off of you."

"Are you a vampire, Edward?" she giggled.

I growled and bit down on her thigh, sucking on the skin. She screamed and I felt her become more aroused. I sucked until I knew I marked her, claiming her as mine. I turned my head and pulled her clit into my mouth and I flicked the sensitive nub with my tongue. One of her hands moved to my hair and she was scratching my scalp, urging me closer to her. I happily complied. With one of my fingers, I slid it into her moist heat. I curled my fingers and I could feel her body react. The muscles around my fingers began fluttering. "You're so beautiful. Especially when you cum, Bella."

I added another finger and began pumping faster. I drew her clit into my mouth and bit down gently. Bella's hips were grinding against me. I moved my tongue with her rhythm that her body created. "Edward. Oh...God!" I added a third finger and I moved my pinky to her ass. With my pinky, I caressed her and she

## La Cantante

was writhing. I felt her muscles begin to flutter more forcefully. She was close. I bit down on her clit and pumped furiously into her. Her muscles clamped down on my fingers and I felt her arousal spill down. I eagerly lapped up all that she had to offer.

I withdrew my fingers and Bella whimpered at the loss of contact. I quickly undid my belt and pulled down my pants and boxers. I moved Bella so she was sitting and wrapped her legs around my waist. I lined up my cock to her entrance. She was still so wet, I easily slid into her. "Fuck, baby. You feel so good." I moved my hips slowly, looking at our connection. Bella reached down and gently caressed her clit. She was looking as well. I could feel her get wetter. I looked up and pulled Bella's face to mine. Her hand was still between us, playing with her clit and lightly caressing my dick as she played. We kissed each other passionately. I felt Bella's muscles begin to flutter.

"Oh, God, Bella. You are so perfect. I love you, baby," I breathed. "I want to feel you come around me."

"I'm close, Edward. I love you so much," she purred. She withdrew her hand and weaved her fingers into my hair. She angled my head and she sucked on my earlobe, nibbled on my jaw and kissed my neck. I moved my hips faster, slamming into her tight body. "Come with me, Edward. I want to feel you."

I leaned her back and angled her hips. I moved my body faster. I could feel the coil in my belly getting tighter. Bella was breathing heavily and she brought her hand back to her clit. "That's so fucking hot, baby," I moaned. I looked at my girl and she had a look of lust, desire, and raw sex in her eyes. She circled her clit quickly and her eyes clamped shut as her muscles clamped down on my cock. I leaned forward and slammed into her and felt my own release come.

I pressed gentle kisses to her chest, up her neck and gave her a languid kiss to her soft, swollen lips. I pulled out of her and we both groaned. I handed her panties and she slipped them back on and righted her dress. I pulled up my boxers and tuxedo pants, leaving my shirt untucked. I took off my bowtie and put it into my jacket pockets.

## La Cantante

"I still can't believe we just did that. I will never, EVER, look at this piano in the same respect ever again," Bella said.

"You and me, both. I just can't get enough of you, beautiful." I helped Bella off the piano and did a quick inspection. There was no evidence of our tryst on the Steinway. I still took a cursory swipe with some paper towels, just to be safe. I slipped my jacket over Bella's shoulders and we turned off the lights on the stage. We headed out to my Volvo.

"My bag and folder! It's still on the stage," she squeaked.

"I got it, beautiful. Here are the car keys; I'll be out in a minute." I ran back into Brandon and grabbed Bella's bag, folder and staff paper off the stage. I vaguely heard something in the auditorium. I looked around and saw nothing. I shook it off and headed back to the car. Bella had the car started and was sitting in the passenger side. I threw her stuff into the backseat and we drove back to Patterson.

xx LC xx

On Sunday, Jasper, Emmett, Bella and I had a rehearsal for Breaking Midnight. We needed to pull together some music for our show on Tuesday. It was going to be at a different venue. Originally, we were going to play at The Chapel. However, it was decided that we were going to play at Eclipse, the club we went to for Bella's birthday. We spent most of the day on Sunday, just shooting out ideas for the show and jamming in my room.

At four, Jasper and Emmett went to the storage facility to get our gear and Bella and I went to the rehearsal space in Brandon. Jasper sent me a text to let me know that they were outside. I left Bella in the rehearsal room and I jogged up the stairs to help unload the truck. We quickly brought all of the equipment inside and walked to the freight elevator. We put the equipment into the elevator and headed to the basement of Brandon.

When the elevator opened up, I heard yelling. Jasper and I furrowed our brows and shot out of the elevator. I ran to the rehearsal room and found Bella in a

corner with James in her face.

"You little bitch! You got me fired!" James spat into her face.

I saw red and I pulled James away from her. I reeled back and punched him in the jaw, sending him flying onto his ass. Jasper was at my side, his blue eyes blazing in anger. James shuffled off the floor and held up his fists, preparing to fight. He lunged for me and I stepped out of his way. Jasper grabbed his collar and he pulled him into a full Nelson. James struggled and I hit him in the stomach. "She didn't get you fired, you fucker. You did that yourself," I seethed.

"If your little girlfriend would have stopped flirting with me, I would still be employed. You need to learn to control your bitch," James coughed.

I backhanded him and out of the corner of my eye, Emmett had come in. "Never speak about Bella that way, you asshole."

I faintly heard Bella on the phone with campus security. She was crying. Jasper released James and he fell to the ground on his knees. He coughed and sputtered. Jasper kept a hold of his collar and James leered at me. "She's nothing but a stupid, worthless bitch. I bet you enjoyed fucking her last night. It was a lot of fun to watch. I would never have pegged her as a screamer. It's always the quiet ones."

I launched myself at James, only to be thwarted by Emmett. "Don't do it, man. He's not worth jail time. He's a sick fucker. Go take care of my sister. I'll handle this piece of shit." Emmett's usually friendly features morphed into a frightening grimace. He crouched down in front of James and sneered in his face, "You're done, asshole. Campus security is on the way and you're going to be arrested for trespassing on public property and assault."

I took a deep breath and walked toward Bella. She was huddled in the corner of the room, shaking like a leaf. I held up my hands, defensively. "Bella?"

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She whimpered and slid down the wall. She curled up into a fetal position, putting her head on her knees. I sat down on the floor in front of her, keeping my distance from her. "Bella, baby? Please? Look at me," I said quietly.

She held her body tighter and her sobs filled the room. Campus security had arrived and dragged James out of the room. Emmett told them what happened and Jasper concurred. The security guard told us not to go, as we needed to give our statement. That was the least of my worries. I was very concerned for my upset girlfriend. One of the security guards approached where Bella and I were sitting. Bella tried to move away, to flee like a frightened animal. Her breathing was frantic, her eyes were glassy, her hands and body were trembling.

"Emmett," I called out. I was watching my love crumble before my eyes. The security guard was still approaching her and I put my hand on his shoulder. I shook my head no. Emmett looked over to his sister and he shot into action.

He went into her bag and pulled a small bottle of pills. He walked over to Bella and held his hands out. "Isabelly. It's Emmett. Listen to my voice," he said quietly. Bella's hands fisted and she shook her head no, pulling at her hair. "Please, Isabelly."

"Edward," she cried. "I need Edward." Emmett turned and looked to me. He handed me the bottle of pills. I quickly looked at the bottle. It was anxiety medication.

"Bella, sweetheart. I'm here," I cooed. "You're okay."

She sobbed and sank back onto the floor. I moved slowly to where she was sitting. I heard her mumbling, "I'm nothing. One big mistake. You're everything Jake ever said you were."

I felt tears fall down my cheeks. "Bella, please. Listen to me. Listen to my voice. You're not 'nothing.' " Emmett put his hand on my shoulder and pointed to the bottle. "Baby, you need to take your medicine. Can you do that for me?"

## La Cantante

She shook her head no and continued to sob. My heart was breaking. I moved closer to Bella and placed my hand on her knee. She jerked away. Her eyes flew to mine. They were glazed over and not focused on anything. "Please, Bella," I pleaded. I reached my hand out and got onto my knees, onto her level. She moved her hand to mine, almost placing it there. She abruptly pulled it away and continued crying.

Emmett crouched down, "You need to get her to take her meds. She will continue to spiral out of control if you don't."

"Was this all because of Jake?" I asked.

"Yeah. She hasn't had an attack like this in awhile. Here's some water," Emmett said quietly.

"How?" I asked, desperate.

"Go with your instincts, Edward. She obviously trusts you or else she would have come to me," Emmett replied sadly.

I nodded. I reached out my hand and grabbed her tiny hand in mine. She began to pull away, but I refused to let go. "Bella, listen to me. It's Edward. I'm not going to hurt you. I'll never hurt you. Ever. Please." I gently tugged on her hand, I felt her move. She uncoiled her body from the fetal position she put herself in. I took out the bottle of pills out of my pocket and shook out one. "Bella, can you take your medicine for me? Please?"

I held out the pill. Bella reluctantly reached for it and snatched it from my hand. She popped it into her mouth and swallowed it without any water. She curled back up and continued to sob hysterically. I reached for Bella and gathered her in my arms. She pushed and shoved me away, but I refused to let her go. I sat against the wall and put Bella onto my lap. She still fought against me. I closed my eyes and began humming her lullaby. As soon as she heard the tune, her body relaxed and she nestled into my lap. She was still crying; I could feel her tears on my chest, through my shirt. I ran my fingers down her back and through her silky hair. I looked up over her head and saw the police had

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come. Jasper and Emmett were giving their statements. A detective walked in. I looked up and saw that it was Detective Lutz.

He crouched down, "Is everything okay, Edward?"

"No, Detective," I replied quietly. "We were coming into Brandon for a rehearsal. Bella and I came earlier to make sure the room was available. I got a text from Jasper saying that he and Emmett were here with our equipment. I went upstairs to load up the freight elevator. When I got down here, I heard yelling. James, the scumbag with the ponytail, was saying that Bella got him fired. He was in her face, cornering her. He looked extremely pissed."

"What happened next, Edward?"

"I pulled him away from Bella and punched him. I thought he was going to hit her," I mumbled, tightening my hold on Bella. She was quiet. Her hands were clutching my shirt and she was still sniffing.

"After you hit him, did he retaliate?"

"Yeah. He lunged for me. Jasper grabbed him by the collar and stopped him. He kept calling Bella names and saying that she was flirting with him," I murmured. I closed my eyes and I felt tears fall onto my face. I heard yelling in the hallway. Detective Lutz got up and walked into the hallway. I listened to their conversation.

"This is horseshit. I want to press charges against that fucker. He punched me!" James yelled.

"That would not be wise, Mr. Lofton. You are trespassing on private property. You assaulted Ms. Swan, Mr. Cullen and Mr. Whitlock. In addition to the other charges be held against you, it ain't going to happen. Don't push it. Officer Stephens, read this scum his rights. You're under arrest."

I pressed a kiss to Bella's hair. She burrowed closer to my body, still crying. Her breathing had calmed down and her pulse was not as fast. Detective Lutz



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came back into the rehearsal room. "I'm assuming you want to press charges against Mr. Lofton?"

I nodded and turned to Bella, "Do you want to press charges, beautiful?"

"What's the point?" she mumbled. "I'm nothing."

I closed my eyes and my heart crumbled. It saddened me to see my confident girl be reduced to this because of words. All because of what Jacob had done in their relationship. "Can we get a moment, Detective?"

He nodded and exited the room. I held onto Bella. "Please don't ever say that, Bella. You are everything to me. You're the reason that I live, the reason I breathe, the reason my heart beats. I love you, beautiful girl. Please believe me when I say that you are my everything. You will always be my everything," I cried. "Will you press charges against James?"

She nodded and sniffled. She scrambled off my lap and stood up. She was shaky on her feet. Her eyes were still glazed over, but she looked better. She turned and walked out of the room. She approached Detective Lutz and told him that she wanted to press charges. She recounted her side of the story and Detective Lutz wrote everything down. Afterward, she sat down on a bench outside the rehearsal space. She looked exhausted. The police and campus security had left and I took Bella into my arms. She could barely raise her arms. She was still broken. Her heart was still heavy. James' words had caused my Bella to completely deflate.

"Are you alright?" I asked.

"No. I'm really tired," she mumbled, looking at her fingers. "I'm going to head back to Patterson. You guys rehearse."

"Bella, I think it's safe to say that we're not having rehearsal. We'll just do the same set that we did for Homecoming, if we even perform at all," I said, brushing her hair off her face. "Come on, I'll drive you back to Patterson. I love you, baby."

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"Are you sure? I'm all kinds of crazy," she said sadly.

"Bella, you are not crazy. You're a bit bereft. However, I can't imagine not being with you," I said, cupping her chin, forcing her to look at me. "However, you need to rest. I can see the affect your medication is having on you. You look a little high."

"Ah, the joys of Ativan. I'm sorry that you had to see me like that. I've been really good at curtailing panic attacks lately. However, this brought back a flood of memories for me," Bella said, standing up. I picked up her bag and put it over my shoulder.

"This is understandable. I'm not sure if Rose or Alice is in your room, but you need to sleep. I'm going to text Jasper and Emmett and tell them that you're going to be in our room, okay?"

She nodded and we walked to the elevator. We got on and rode up to street level in silence. I deposited Bella into the passenger seat and I walked to the driver's side. I drove us back Patterson and we climbed the stairs to my room.

"Edward?"

"Yes, love?"

"Did I hear James correctly? Was he in the auditorium last night?" Bella asked warily.

"I think he was. When I went back to get your bag, I heard something. I thought it was nothing, but we can safely assume that it was James," I replied quietly.

Bella paled and covered her face with her hands. I could hear her sniffing again. "I'm so embarrassed."

"Me, too. I'm so sorry, beautiful Please don't blame yourself," I reassured. "I'm the one with no self-control."

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"I was a willing participant, Edward. However, that was meant for us. Not for that asshole, James. He got his own live porno. What if he taped it? What if he sends the tape to the university?" Bella said, panic crossing over her beautiful features.

"We'll cross that bridge if it ever happens. However, I don't think James would have enough brain cells to run a camcorder. Baby, you need to rest. Lay down and close your eyes," I pleaded.

"Can you stay with me?" Bella asked.

"Of course. Scooch over," I asked. Bella moved over and I settled into the bed with my girl. She rolled so her back was to me. I slipped my arm under her head and the other arm around her waist. She laced her fingers with mine and settled into a deep sleep. I watched her as her face began to relax and the stress left her face. I pressed a kiss to her temple and put my head on my pillow. I closed my own eyes and fell into my own sleep.

xx LC xx

When I woke up, I was in an empty bed. I was very confused. I looked around and heard Emmett and Jasper. I felt around on my pillow and there was a note.

*Edward,*

*I'm sorry that you had to see me like that. I thought I had my panic attacks under control. Obviously not. Thank you for taking care of me. I wanted to head down to my room because while I sleep better in your arms, I needed some space. Please don't be upset. I love you and I hope you understand.*

*Your Bella*

I understood that Bella needed space but I was not happy. I couldn't protect her from the asshole, James. I needed to be with her. I huffed and laid back down on my pillows. The pillows that smelled like Bella. I held one of my pillows over my face and inhaled deeply, relishing the floral scent of my girl. I pulled

## La Cantante

the pillow away and sat up. I padded to the bathroom and washed my face and put on some sleep pants. I crawled back into the empty bed and fell into a fitful sleep.

When I woke up for the day, I had realized that I slept through my alarm. I looked at my clock on my desk and it read 7:15. I shot out of bed and dashed into the bathroom. I brushed my teeth and went out into the main room. I picked up my phone and shot out a text to Bella.

*Running VERY late. Slept through my alarm. Will meet you at theory. Love you*  
- E

I stripped off my sleep pants and pulled on a pair of jeans and hoodie. I covered my hair with a baseball cap. I grabbed my messenger bag and books and ran out the door. I walked into theory right before Larry had arrived. I went to sit in my usual seat and found that Bella was not there. I checked my phone to see if she had responded to my text, but she hadn't.

*Bella, where are you? Are you okay? - E*

I sat back down and pulled out my notes and waited for class to begin. Larry walked in and he passed out an assignment for us to complete. It would be due on finals week. I grabbed a copy for Bella and took impeccable notes. I wanted to be able to explain it to her.

The rest of theory went by uneventfully. I put away my things and decided to head back to Patterson in between my classes. I was still concerned about Bella, as I hadn't heard from her. I climbed the stairs to her room and gently knocked on the door. Alice opened it up.

"Hey, Big Brother," she said. "Are you looking for Bella?"

"Yeah, Pixie. She wasn't in theory this morning and I hadn't heard from her," I replied sadly.

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Alice moved aside and pulled me onto the couch. "She was very upset when she came back from your room. She didn't want to talk about it. However, Rose and I convinced her to go to the campus counseling center. I'm assuming she's still there. What happened yesterday?"

"James got in her face, telling her that she was worthless 'nothing.' It brought back all the emotions that she had when she was with Jacob. He said that Bella got him fired because of her flirting and accusations."

"James was your music theory TA?" Alice asked.

"Yeah. Complete asshole. Anyway, Bella had a pretty serious panic attack because of his words and accusations. I think the stress of everything that has happened finally broke her. I felt so powerless. She was so afraid and lost. I'm worried, Alice."

"She'll get through this. She'll need some help. However, you'll both get through this. I promise you. I have a feeling," Alice said cryptically.

"You and your feelings," I chuckled, humorlessly. I heard the door unlock and I looked at the door expectantly. Bella walked in looking very haggard and drawn. Her hair hung limply around her shoulders and she had her glasses on.

"How are you feeling, Bella?" Alice asked sympathetically.

"Better. I'm going to be meeting with a counselor once a week for a while to get over these feelings of inadequacy," Bella explained. Bella had walked to her desk and hadn't noticed me. She turned around and looked up and gasped. "Oh, Christ! Edward! You startled me. I didn't know you were here."

"Sorry, Bella. I was concerned when I didn't see you in theory this morning. I thought something had gone wrong," I muttered sadly.

"Something did go wrong. I let my emotions take control over me and I couldn't get over it. Alice and Rose pushed me to go to the counseling center. I think it's going to work. However, you'll have to be patient with me. All of

you."

"Whatever, you need Bella," Alice said as she gave her a hug. "Especially retail therapy. That's the best kind. How about we go shopping this afternoon? I saw this adorable little sweater dress that would look fabulous on you. You can wear it for Thanksgiving!"

"Okay, Alice. Sounds like a plan," Bella said with a smile.

"I'm going to head off. I have to go to my marketing class. Love you, Bella."

"Bye, Ali."

I got up and tentatively walked over to where Bella was standing. She turned around and gave me a small smile. She was still troubled. However, her eyes had some life in them. Seeing her glazed over and dazed scared me. She melted into my chest and I wrapped my arms around her. "Do you want to talk about what happened at the counseling center? Last night?" I asked hesitantly.

She nodded and took my hand into hers and led me to her bed. She settled on the bed near the pillows and picked up the lion I had gotten her, clutching it to her chest. She crossed her legs and faced me. I sat down and mirrored her. "Edward, I haven't told anyone this, except Emmett and my dad. Not even my mom knows," she began. "After the situation with Jacob, I was paralyzed with fear of what he did to me. I was able to get through the school day without any problems. However, at night, I would get these debilitating panic attacks. What you saw last night was mild compared to what I had to deal with in the aftermath of Jacob's attack. When they started, I refused to get help. There was one attack when Emmett was home where I threatened to hurt myself in order control my thoughts. I pulled a steak knife and dragged it along my skin." Bella lifted her sleeve and showed me a thin scar on her arm.

"That scared both Emmett and Charlie. They dragged me to the hospital and I was admitted. I was in the hospital for three days on a psych hold. I wasn't threatening to end my life. I just wanted the pain in my heart to stop. While in the hospital, I was diagnosed with depression and a very acute, but severe case

## La Cantante

of anxiety. I took antidepressants for about six months and worked with my psychiatrist to get off of them. I am over my depression. However, I still get these anxiety attacks. Sometimes my body just shuts down, like in the police station. Other times, I get so upset that all rational thought goes out the window. If you hadn't talked me down, it would have escalated to the point where I could have hurt myself again. Thank you, Edward. I'm so sorry that you had to see me like that," Bella sniffled. "I understand if... if... you don't want me after yesterday. Hell, I don't want me after yesterday."

She wiped her cheeks with her hands and curled up. She was looking down, tears still flowing down her face. I moved closer to her, so our knees were touching. I gently rubbed her tears away with my thumbs. I kept my hands on her face and forced her to look at me. "Bella, I wish I could go back in time to prevent what happened, I would. I hate that Jacob caused all these problems. I hate what it does to you. However, I will never stop wanting you. You have the kindest heart and the most beautiful soul. You're my other half. I just got you and I don't want to let you go. You need to promise me, though. You cannot, under any circumstance, hurt yourself. My heart was nearly ripped out of my chest when I saw you in pain yesterday. Please, baby. I love you more than my own life. I couldn't survive if you hurt yourself or if anything happened to you," I cried.

She looked at me and saw the determination in my face. She nodded and threw herself into my arms. I held her tightly and kissed her hair. "I love you, too, Edward," she said as she pulled away. She kept her hands in mine, "You do need to patient with me. With what James said yesterday, all of the emotions that I had with Jacob came flowing back. I'm feeling very...worthless...I guess that's the best way to describe it."

"What can I do to help?" I asked, squeezing her hands.

"Love me. Support me. Be understanding and patient. Just be you, Edward. There was a reason I clung to you yesterday and that was because you have been so supportive these past few months. Keep doing what you've been doing," Bella said simply.

"Anything for you, baby. I'd do anything for you. I love you so much," I replied. "Can you stay here for a minute? I have to run up to my room." Bella nodded and I darted up to my room. I went into my closet and pulled the jewelry bag. I had originally decided to give Bella her promise ring on New Year's Eve. However, it seemed important that I give it to her now. I needed her to know that I was in this for the long haul. I opened up the box and stared at the beautiful sapphire ring sitting in its box. I smiled and shut the box and ran back to Bella's room.

"Everything alright, Edward?" she asked, with a wary look.

"Fine. I got something for you and I wanted to run upstairs so I could give it to you. I had this grand idea of presenting it to you on New Year's Eve, but I wanted to give it to you now. I want you to know that I am always going to be here for you, Bella. It represents a promise that I'm making to you today. I promise in the future, the NEAR future, I will want you to be my wife," I slid to my knee, "This is not a proposal, but a promise. A promise of my undying love. A promise of our future. A promise of everything I want to share with you. Isabella Marie Swan, will you wear this ring until I do propose?" I opened the box and placed it in Bella's hand. She gasped at the ring and tears were falling down her cheeks. "Don't cry, beautiful. This is supposed to be a good thing."

"I'm not crying because I'm sad. I'm crying because I'm happy. Of course, I'll wear the ring," she said with a watery smile. I slipped the ring out of the box and slipped it on her left ring finger. "I love you, Edward. Thank you for everything." She looked down at her ring and she took a sharp intake of breath. "It's gorgeous, Edward. It's too much."

"I love you so much more and it's not too much. I would have rather got you an engagement ring, but I didn't want to freak you out," I said with a lopsided grin. I got up off the floor and peppered her face with kisses. "Now you have tangible proof that I will marry you. You don't have to be so stressed when we move in together."



## La Cantante

"This is true," she laughed. Her face broke into a genuine smile and she gently pushed me on the bed. She nestled on my chest. "Thank you, Edward. You are the most perfect almost-fiancé ever."

"Oh, no, Bella. That would be you. I love you, beautiful girl," I said, cupping her chin and kissing her lips.

"I love you more, Edward," she giggled.

"Impossible."

"We should probably head to class. If we leave now, we'll just get there in time," Bella said responsibly.

"Oh, fine. I'd rather spend the day cuddled with my almost-fiancée. I guess we need an education. Damn it," I grumbled. We got up off her bed and she put on her coat and grabbed her bag. We linked fingers and headed out to our classes. I smiled at what happened. I was still worried about my girl, but now our relationship had moved in a more positive direction. She now wore my promise ring and soon she will be my wife.

**A/N: If you want to see what Bella ring looks likes, I have a link in my profile. Edward is also giving her the rest of the set and it's on my profile as well.**

**Up next, Breaking Midnight's missing rehearsal, Eclipse performance and some citrus, possibly.**

# Eclipse

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 38: Eclipse

### BPOV

I couldn't stop staring at my left hand. The ring Edward had gotten me was absolutely gorgeous. It was white gold with a large oval sapphire in the middle. On the neck of the ring were baguette diamonds and round diamonds further down along the side. I barely paid attention during my education class. We received our final assignments for the class and were told that they were due finals week. This was in lieu of a written final, we just had to write this massive paper. It was to create a complete unit for your subject, with lessons, assessments and reflection over the process. My teacher told me that I couldn't do a choral assignment. I had to use a general music assignment. I decided to a Western Music History unit, focusing on the different composers.

At the end of class, I gathered my stuff and headed out of the classroom. My phone beeped from my pocket of my fleece.

*How was education, beautiful? I missed you - E*

*Good. We got our final assignment. I couldn't pay attention, though. - B*

*Why?*

*I was blinded by the massive bling I have on my left hand - B*

*I will NOT apologize for that. It is proof that you're MINE, beautiful - E*

## La Cantante

*I know. I was just easily distracted by the shiny thing on my finger. I'm like a crow. - B*

*Speaking of assignments, we got an assignment in theory. I'll explain it to you when I see you after your psychology class - E*

*Is it hard? - B*

*It won't be for us. I love you, beautiful girl - E*

*I love you more, handsome - B*

*Highly unlikely - E*

*I guess we'll agree to disagree, Edward - B*

*I like these kind of disagreements, Bella - E*

*See you later. Love you - B*

*LOVE YOU MORE! - E*

I chuckled and shook my head. I walked into my psychology class and settled in next to Jasper. He was pulling out his notebook and doodling on the corner of his paper.

"Hey, Bella. How are you feeling, darlin?" he drawled. He smiled, but it didn't reach his eyes. I lowered my head in shame. I forgot that he saw my meltdown last night.

"I'm better, Jasper. I'm sorry you had to see that last night," I mumbled.

"Bella, I'm sorry you had to deal with *that* last night. That guy was an asshole. However, I'm concerned for you."

## La Cantante

"I'm going to work with a counselor here on campus and try to work through those issues. I haven't had an attack like that in a couple of months," I said, looking at Jasper. His face was laced with concern.

"Bella, you don't have to tell me anything. However, you have to know that you are nowhere near what that fucker called you. You're talented, smart and you make my roommate insanely happy. I've only known you for a few months, but I've grown to love you like a sister. If you ever need anything, darlin, I'm here for you," Jasper said, reaching out and holding my hand. He looked down and saw my ring. "Whoa! What's that?"

"Edward gave it to me. It's a promise ring," I said, with a bashful smile.

"Damn! That boy really does have it bad for you. I know he went to the mall with Alice a couple of weeks ago, looking for something special for you, but I didn't expect this. That is beautiful," Jasper gushed.

"It really is. I was completely blind-sided when he gave it to me. I didn't even know he had done something like this. The fact that he gave it to me after one of my darkest moments baffles me. He's truly wonderful. I don't know what I did to deserve him," I said, my voice cracking.

"The same thing he did to deserve you, Bella. Edward was a bit of a lost soul. He was sad and pissed off at the world after his mom died. He was furious and lost when his dad gave him up after the death of his mom. He was always respectful and nice, but there always some grief and rage. Since he's met you that has gone away. I never believed in soul mates. However, you two are the epitome of soul mates. You complete each other. I obviously didn't know you before this year, but despite the drama you've had to endure, being with Edward has made you stronger."

"Wow. Thank you, Jasper. That means a lot to me," I said with a smile.

"Anytime, darlin. However, do you think you could come with me to the mall at some point? I want to get something for Alice that'll blow her mind. You're the closest person to her besides Edward. I don't want bring him because that

## La Cantante

would just be weird," Jasper said with a grin.

"You got it. How about when we get back from Thanksgiving we'll head out after U.S. History one Tuesday?" I suggested.

"Fantastic!" he beamed. He leaned back in his chair and our nerdy professor stumbled into the room. I turned to face him and listened to another boring lecture about the different layers of the human psyche.

xx LC xx

After psychology, Jasper and I walked back to Patterson. We didn't have University Singers rehearsal today. Eleazar wanted us to rest after our concert this weekend. He said that we would begin preparing our music for our Italy tour when we returned from Thanksgiving break. Jasper had received a text from Alice and told us to meet them in the cafeteria. Jasper and I scanned our ID cards and got some food. We walked to the table in the back of the cafeteria where everyone was sitting. Edward got up and grabbed my tray, while I took off my coat and put my bag by my feet. I settled into my chair next to Edward and he gave me a quick, but passionate kiss.

"I missed you, love," he whispered. He raised my left hand and kissed my ring, raising his brow. "I really love seeing this on your hand, Bella."

"I love having it there. It means that I'm yours," I breathed.

We were pulled from our reverie by a loud clearing of the throat. Emmett threw a few fries at Edward and sneered at him. "Quit pawing my sister, Cullen. We're in public, for fuck's sake."

Edward took the fries that were in his lap and chucked them back at Emmett.

"Please, Emmett. It's not like we're having sex on a piano or anything," Edward laughed. He winked at me and wiggled his brows. "I just kissed her knuckles. Christ!"

## La Cantante

I blushed and shook my head. I brought my hand and ran it through my hair. I heard both Alice and Rose squeal. I shot my eyes up at them and they were both bouncing in their seats.

"Edward! When did you do it?" Alice screeched.

"Do what?" Emmett asked.

"Uh, this morning after music theory, I made a promise to Bella that I would propose to her. I gave her this promise ring," Edward replied, his cheeks a shade of red. "With all that happened recently, I needed to show Bella that I will always be there for her, no matter what. That I will always love her."

"So, did you propose or did you not propose? I'm so confused," Emmett said rubbing his temple.

"I didn't propose, yet. However, the ring indicates that I will," Edward clarified.

"Can we see, Bella?" Rose squealed. I held out my left hand and she nearly yanked my arm out of its socket. "Oh my word! This absolutely gorgeous! Edward, you have impeccable taste."

"Edward, you didn't need to show me anything. I know that you will always be there for me," I said when I got my hand back. "My reaction this morning is what I'm dealing with the counselor. You didn't need to get me this. I appreciate it and I find myself just staring at it, you didn't need to get me anything to show that you love me. I see it every day."

"I know. I just felt that it was the right time, beautiful. I love you," Edward said with a smile.

"I love you too," I replied. I leaned in and kissed him. I was being pegged with French fries. I pulled away from Edward and glared at my brother.

I got up and smacked him behind the head. He brought his hand up to his head and gave me a dimply grin. "My Isabelly's back!"

## La Cantante

I sat back down and rolled my eyes. I tucked into my salad. I swiped a fry from Edward's plate and gave him a wink. He pouted and popped an olive from my salad into his mouth. I elbowed him. He poked my side and gave me a crooked grin.

"So, Bella. Rose and I want to go shopping today. You're coming. We're not taking no for an answer. You need some retail therapy, like I said earlier this morning," Alice chimed.

"Oh, God."

"You need something to wear tomorrow for your gig at Eclipse and for Thanksgiving," Alice wheedled.

"Alice, I'll go. However, we need to have rehearsal for the show," I said, looking at Edward in desperation. His eyes widened at what I was implying.

"Yeah, Pixie. Because of the drama last night with James, we didn't get an opportunity to rehearse. We need to do that tonight. I'm going to contact Eclipse to see if we can use their space and set up tonight," Edward covered.

"Okay. What time do you think you'll need Bella back?" Alice said with a pout.

"Shoot for four, four thirty at the latest, Pixie."

"Ugh, fine. I can work my magic in three hours. Come Bella, finish your food and prepared to be dazzled. I've already made you an appointment at this fabulous spa to get your hair cut and dyed. Rose and I are your personal shoppers for today," Alice chirped.

"Fuck."

"Just for that, you're getting another bikini wax, Bella. We'll meet you up in the room," Alice said, ruffling my hair. She pulled on Jasper's hands and he followed her. Emmett and Rose gave each other a kiss. Emmett gave me a smile and headed to his next class. Rose went up to our room.

## La Cantante

I put my head into my arms. "What have I gotten myself into? How do you handle her?"

"Alcohol. Trust me. I'll probably be buzzed a good portion of this weekend to handle her shenanigans," Edward laughed. "However, I'll let you in a little secret. I really like the bikini wax. A. Lot."

I raised my head and whimpered. Edward's eyes were a shade of forest green, piercing through my soul. I could feel the desire flood through my body at his reaction. I pulled my bottom lip into my teeth. Edward raised his hand and with his thumb gently removed my lip from my teeth. He rubbed my lip, causing tingles of excitement to travel through my veins. He leaned forward and gave me a chaste kiss and stood up. He grabbed our trays and headed toward the exit. I slipped my bag over my head and followed him. He reached into his pocket and handed me his car keys.

"You drive today. I'm certain that you probably can't handle Alice's imitation of the Autobahn. I have to call and set up the phone, cable and other things for our place. I love you, beautiful," Edward said as he dropped me off at my room. He kissed me and sauntered up to his room.

I unlocked the door and walked into my room. I grabbed my purse and stood by the door. "Let's go, wenches," I laughed.

"You're driving?" Rose asked.

"Yep. Edward gave me the keys to the Soccer Mobile," I said, dangling his keys.

"That's perfect! We'll need the trunk space," Alice said. She grabbed her purse and darted out the door, skipping down the hall. I shook my head and followed the sprite, linking arms with Rose.

We got downstairs and all got into Edward's car. I adjusted the seat so I could reach the pedals. I loved Edward but he had some freakishly long legs. I couldn't even touch the pedals if I leaned down in seat. Once I got the car



## La Cantante

situated to how I wanted it, I turned it over and eased it out of the parking spot. I was very grateful for Edward in lending me his car. I definitely needed to be in control of something. I would not have handled Alice's psychotic driving well in my fragile mental state.

I drove carefully to the mall, getting some teasing from the pixie. I nearly smacked her. I told her that if she kept it up, she'd ride back to Emerson in the trunk and the packages would be in the backseat. Alice instructed me where to park. We pulled into a spot near the day spa where I was pampered before Homecoming. I had barely turned off the car when Alice pulled me out of the driver's seat, running to the entrance of the spa. She informed the receptionist that we were here and they dragged me off to a stylist's chair.

"Bella, you trust us, right?" Alice asked. Rose gave me a warm grin.

"Sure. Why do you ask?" I responded warily.

"Just curious. You stay here and get beautified. Rose and I will get you a few things for this weekend. I'm going to talk to your stylist about your hair and look. We'll be back in a little bit," Alice said, kissing me on the cheek.

I slipped off my jacket and settled back into the chair. I couldn't get comfortable. I got up and grabbed my cell phone from my purse and shot off a text to Edward.

*Your sister is UP to something. - B*

*She's always up to something. Enjoy it beautiful - E*

*I'll try. Love you. - B*

*Love you more, my beautiful girl - E*

*Xoxox - B*

## La Cantante

I put my phone into my pocket of my jeans and waited for the stylist to show up. Alice and this short man came up behind me. They were talking animatedly with their hands. I was confused at their banter. I didn't understand a thing they were saying.

*I'm sorry. I don't speak "beauty-ese."*

"Bella, this is Francisco. He's going to be working on you today," Alice said.

"Hello, Bella. What a perfect name for you," he said as he pulled my hair from the ponytail holder. "Such beautiful hair! Here's what I want to do with you: I want to take off some of the dead ends of your hair. About two, maybe three inches. Then I want to deepen your color to a rich chestnut with some bronze and copper highlights. Add some layers, perhaps some bangs. We'll also clean up your eyebrows and my little Alice said that you need a bikini wax. Shay will do that for you. She's our aesthetician. You will look fabulous!"

I nodded dumbly and settled back to get 'transformed.' Before Francisco began attacking my head, I texted Edward.

*Make sure there's enough alcohol this weekend for me. I'm going to kill Alice. - B*

xx LC xx

Two and half hours later, my hair was dyed, cut and straightened. I also had my brows waxed along with my girlie bits.

*That fucking hurts! Damn!*

Shay, the aesthetician also applied some makeup and gave me a bag of all the goodies she used on me. She marveled about how smooth my skin was and my perfect, pouty mouth. Before she left, she asked for my phone number. I waved my left hand saying I was taken. She frowned said that she was a lucky bitch. I explained that 'she' was a 'he' and that I was the lucky one.

## La Cantante

I walked, er, rather waddled out of the salon to find Alice and Rose sitting in the waiting area with a score of bags by their feet.

"What have you both done?" I gaped.

"Shopping spree. We both got some cute things and we decided to overhaul your closet, Bella," Alice said with a grin.

"I like my clothes," I whined.

"You have some cute things, Bella. However, we're just adding to them!" Rose laughed.

"Oh, goodness! I got to pay for my make-over," I said as I walked to the cashier.

"Don't worry about it, Bella. It's all paid for," Alice said. "We've got to head back to Emerson so you guys can go rehearse for your show tomorrow."

My jaw fell open. This was insane. I knew what my hair and spa treatment cost. I had received some money from my parents for my birthday and I was prepared to use that for salon. I eyed the packages by their feet and I gulped visibly. Rose got up and closed my mouth. She laughed.

"You look like a cod. Stop gaping, Bella. Let's head back to campus," she giggled.

I shook my head and burrowed in my purse to pull out Edward's keys. I grabbed a few bags and we walked out to his car. I popped the trunk and we loaded up the bags. Rose sat in front with me and Alice was in the back. I eased out of the parking spot and drove back to Emerson.

"Thanks, guys. I really appreciate this. I don't know how I can repay you, though. This has got to cost a small fortune," I said, sheepishly.

## La Cantante

"It does, but you're worth it. Seeing as you are going to be my sister and all," Alice said from the back seat.

I looked down at my ring and smiled. I was giddy at the fact that Edward was thinking about marriage. I was never one to imagine I'd ever get married. My parents' marriage didn't work out well and I was hesitant to think about jumping into the same situation. Now, having Edward, I couldn't imagine NOT wanting to be married to him. He was the epitome of a perfect gentleman who dotes and loves his wife. I was pulled out of my reverie by a loud car horn. The light had turned green and I was still stopped.

"You okay, Bella?" Rose asked. "You spaced out."

"Just thinking about the future," I said with a wistful grin.

"Does that future have you in a white dress walking down the aisle to Edward in a tuxedo?" Rose beamed.

"Yep! And I might add he looks damn fine!" I laughed.

"I'm going to call Jas and have him and the rest of the boys bring up our bags," Alice chirped. She quickly dialed her phone and spoke very quickly with Jasper. "So, Bella, when you and Edward get married, please let me design your dress and plan your wedding? Please?"

"Ali, it's not going to be for a while. Jeesh," I retorted.

"Promise me that you'll let me do this for you?" Alice pressed.

"Fine. However, I get veto power of the guest list and please no ice sculptures."

"Got it!"

We listened to Alice's iPod on our way back to campus. We bopped to the music that came through the speakers, just enjoying our time together. I pulled into the parking lot and eased the car into a spot. Alice texted Jasper to bring

## La Cantante

down reinforcements. Jasper, Edward and Emmett all lumbered down and I popped the trunk. Edward's eyes widened at the stash of bags in the trunk of the car.

"Holy shit, Mary Alice! Did you buy out the entire mall?" Edward gaped.

"No. Silly boy. Only half of the mall," she said as she pinched his cheek.

I slid out of the car and Edward turned to look at me. Once again, his eyes widened. They immediately darkened when he looked at my make-over. He stalked over and ran his fingers through my straight hair. "So soft. So beautiful. Fuck. You look amazing, Bella," he growled.

I blushed and looked up at him through my lashes. "Thank you, Edward. Alice was saying I was looking shaggy. So this happened," I replied, flipping my hair.

He ran his hand through my chestnut tresses. "I fucking love it, beautiful. Your hair is all different shades of brown and it's beautiful."

"My favorite shade is this one," I said looking through my hair, finding the highlights that they chose that were bronze. "It's close to your color."

He picked up the small portion of hair and raised his brow. He laced his fingers into my hair and pulled flush to his hard body. He ran his nose down my jaw, inhaling deeply. He stopped right above my lips, just centimeters away. "I'm so fucking lucky to have you. You're mine, beautiful. I love you." His lips crashed against mine and his tongue danced with mine.

"Edward, quit tongue raping my sister," Alice chirped.

"Sister?" Edward replied, turning to look at her.

"You are getting married, right? That'll make Bella my sister. Duh!" she explained.

## La Cantante

"She's been like this all day," I said with a giggle.

"Well, she's right. We are getting married," Edward growled.

"EDWARD! Stop thinking with your dick! Help us!" Alice commanded.

"Yes, you little Nazi-Pixie." Edward gave me another kiss and reluctantly let me go. He grabbed a couple of bags and waited for me before heading up to my room. I locked Edward's car and followed him into Patterson. Alice had already dumped a ton of clothes onto my bed. All of them were from my closet. There was also a pile on the floor.

"Alice! What's the deal?" I screeched.

"The pile on your bed are the ones you get to keep. The ones on the floor are destined for the great closet in the sky. We're just reorganizing your closet so you have a ton of outfits to choose from," Alice chirped from my closet.

"You do realize that I'm only living here for another month. After that, I'm moving in with Edward."

"Sweet. We can go shopping when you are moved in there and make your closet FABULOUS!" she chimed.

"Alice, remember, she has to share a closet with me. It's a walk in, but the space not unlimited," Edward said with grimace on his face.

"You can use the smaller closet in the guest bedroom. Bella gets the walk in," Alice reasoned.

Both of our jaws dropped. "Alice, this is OUR apartment. Bella and I will determine how we split closet space when we move in. Back off," Edward said with a tone of finality.

"You two are no fun. I guess I'll just have to deal with reorganizing your closet here at school, Bella." Alice turned her attention to hanging the new clothes

## La Cantante

that she had gotten me. She then took the extra hangers and handed them to me. She pointed to the pile of clothes on the bed and I rolled my eyes and started hanging up my clothes. Edward took it upon himself to pull a garbage bag from my desk drawer and put my 'undesirable clothes' into the bag. He stopped when the hoodie he got me was in the pile.

"No way, Mary Alice. Bella is keeping this," he said.

"Why? It's just a hoodie."

My eyes darted to the piece of fabric in Edward's hands. "No, I'm keeping that. That was the first thing Edward ever got me and I want to be buried with it." I snatched the hoodie from Edward and pulled it over my shirt.

"You can keep it, Bella. But you shouldn't wear it now. It doesn't go with your hair," she grumbled. I stubbornly shook my head no and turned back to my pile of clothes on the bed. Edward finished loading up my clothes and tied the garbage bag.

He walked up behind me and slipped his arms around my waist. He nuzzled my hair, pressing a wet kiss to the sensitive spot below my ear. He laced his fingers with mine, picking up our left hands. My fingers were intertwined with his and we both stared at the ring on my ring finger. Our hands were so different. His fingers were long and elegant. My hands were tiny, like that of a doll. He ran his thumb over the top of my ring and I felt him smile against my neck. "I love you."

"I love you, too, Edward." I turned my face and pressed a kiss to his jaw.

"We got to get going soon. We need to be at Eclipse at five. Thank goodness they're closed today. Jasper and Emmett picked up the equipment from Brandon after lunch and loaded it into the truck."

I looked at the clock and it was a little after four. "Can we leave in fifteen minutes?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"Sure thing, love. I'm going to run upstairs and take a quick shower and we'll head on out," he said. He gave me a quick kiss and darted out of the room. I finished my task of hanging my clothes and handed them to Alice. She had reorganized my closet and now was working on my underwear drawer.

"Alice, you are one weird chick," I laughed.

"I know. But I'm proud of it. I want to show you something," she said as hopped up. She danced over to her closet and pulled out a garment bag. "This is what you're wearing tomorrow."

She pulled off the garment bag and revealed my concert attire. It was a pair of black jeans with a sapphire blue halter top. For shoes, she had a pair of black knee high boots with three inch heels. As much as I wanted to hate it, I couldn't. It was sleek and sophisticated and Edward would totally cream his pants when he saw me in this outfit. I raised a brow and gave her a wicked smile. "Perfect, isn't it?"

"Oh yeah."

"Also, Jasper and I are heading Chez Cullen tomorrow after the show so, there will be an available room. Edward can have his wicked way with you," Alice smiled. "Try 69. I think you'll like it."

"Thanks for the tip, Ali. I will definitely think about it," I grinned.

Alice put the outfit back into the garment bag and stuffed it back into her closet. Edward had returned. His hair was wet and sticking up in random spikes. He smelled delicious. I threw my arms around him and inhaled his wonderful scent. It was his cologne, body wash and something that was inherently Edward. He held me tightly and wove his fingers through my hair. He sighed and let me go. He went got my jacket and held it out for me. He pointed to the car keys on my desk. I handed them to him but he pushed them into my hand.

"You're driving tonight, beautiful. Control, thing, remember?"



## La Cantante

"Got it. Thanks, Edward. I love you," I said kissing his nose.

"I love you more."

"Gag me, you two," Alice said, mimicking puking.

Edward walked over to her and ruffled her hair. She smacked him on the chest and stuck her tongue at him. He returned the favor and did the same thing, minus the smacking. Edward strode back to me and laced his fingers with mine and we headed out Eclipse

xx LC xx

We rehearsed our show for Breaking Midnight, making adjustments for the new venue. Edward was such a perfectionist. However, that's what made him a fantastic musician. The management of Eclipse told us that we could keep our equipment there overnight. That was one less thing to worry about. I was worried about stage anxiety. I had the anxious feelings before, but never so close to a performance. I decided that I needed to put on my big girl panties and deal with it.

After about two hours, we decided to call it quits and head back to Patterson. Emmett ordered some pizza and we picked it up on way back to school. We all settled into my room and watched a movie. Afterward, the guys went upstairs and we went to sleep.

On Tuesday, I met with Larry after Aural Harmony. I explained my situation of what happened with James and how it affected me. I also told him that Edward gave me our final assignment and explained the directions. Larry was very understanding about my issues and was upset that James had managed to get back onto campus and into Brandon. His keys were taken away when he was terminated. It was probably another student who let him into the building.

The rest of the day was a bit of a blur. After U.S. History, I headed back to Patterson to get ready for the show. I removed my promise ring and put it on my desk. I hopped into the shower and washed my hair. I decided to leave it

## La Cantante

down and curly. I put some mousse in it and used the diffuser that Alice had given me for my hair dryer. When my hair was dry enough, I popped in my contact lenses and began applying my makeup. I heard the door open and Rose bellowed if anyone was home. I alerted her that I was in the bathroom. She poked her head in and sat on the counter.

"Come here, Bella. You need some desperate help with makeup," she said as she picked up my blush. She ran the brush over my cheekbones and my forehead.

"Sorry, not everyone was blessed with natural beauty," I snorted.

"Bella, you're gorgeous. However, you do not know how to play up your natural features. When you apply your blush, put in on the apples of your cheeks and right by the hairline. That's where the sun naturally hits your face if you get a tan or sunburn," Rose instructed. She then picked up some silver, gun metal eye shadow and swept it over my lids. She grabbed a charcoal grey eyeliner pencil and smudged it on near my lashes. She finally picked up some darker silver shadow and ran it across the eyeliner. She finished the look with a layer of black mascara. She turned my face to look in the mirror. My eyes were smoky and alluring. She handed me a tube of some lipstick and I quickly applied it. It was a deep, dusty rose. "You look absolutely hot, Swan. If I was a lesbian, I'd do you."

"Thanks, Rose. The feeling is mutual," I giggled. "Speaking of lesbians, yesterday at the salon, the aesthetician totally hit on me. She said complimented me on my skin and my pouty lips. Then she asked for my phone number. I wiggled my left hand saying I was taken. She frowned and said that my girlfriend was a lucky bitch."

"She didn't!"

"Yep, she did. I told her that my girlfriend was a boyfriend and she turned a lovely shade of pink," I guffawed.

## La Cantante

"Bella, you are one hot chick. You have a ton of boys and girls falling all over each other to get some," Rose teased.

"Oh, please. One gay aesthetician does not make a ton," I grumbled, cleaning up my makeup.

"Um, Tyler, Mike Newton, Austin, the gay aesthetician, Senna, to name a few, Bella. Also, not to mention your fuckhawt boyfriend, Edward."

"Shut the fuck up. Really? You are smoking some serious crack, Rose."

"Yes, really. Come on, you need to get into your hot outfit for tonight. Alice showed it to me after you left to rehearse with the guys. Edward is going to be eating out the palm of your hand. The color of the shirt perfectly matches your ring."

"That's Alice for you," I laughed. I went into Alice's closet and pulled the garment bag with my clothes in it. I unzipped it and pulled out the jeans. I noticed in the bottom of the bag there was a small pink bag. I opened it up and saw it was underwear for tonight. It was a sapphire blue pair of boy shorts. That was it.

*No bra?*

I went back into the bathroom and put on my panties. I walked out and pulled on my jeans. They were tight in all the right places. I put on a pair of socks and slipped the boots on over the jeans. I then took off the halter top from the hanger and pulled it over my head. I tied the straps into a bow and looked down. It was one of those cowl-neck halters and it was very low cut. I slipped on my ring and the sterling silver cuff Alice put in the pink bag with my underwear. She also provided some very chunky silver earrings that were in a similar shape of the cuff.

"What do you think about tattoos, Rose?" I asked. I was looking in my mirror and I really liked the idea of getting a tattoo, on my shoulder.

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"They're okay. I personally wouldn't get one, but the artistry of them can be quite lovely. One of my sorority sisters had this absolutely gorgeous butterfly in the middle of her back. The colors were so vibrant and it looked real. Are you thinking of getting one?"

"I think so. I was thinking about getting an abstract swan, to play off my name or something music related. Perhaps marrying the two together. I'm not sure," I said. "However, I do know that I want it on my shoulder or my hip."

"Interesting. Color or black and grey?" Rose questioned.

"Probably black and grey. The ideas I have floating in my head are outlines," I said with a shrug. I heard a timid knock on the door. I opened it up and there was Edward, in a pair of black jeans and a tight black t-shirt. His hair in its usual casual disarray and his green eyes sparking.

"Hey, beautiful. You look outstanding," he said as he raked his eyes over me. His eyes stopped momentarily at my chest and the irises darkened to a deep forest green.

"Thanks, handsome. You look amazing as well. Come on in. It's just me and Rose," I said, ushering him inside.

"Hey Edward. Okay, so I'm the queen of blunt. Bella told me you have a tattoo. I can't picture you with one, can I see it?" Rose said, quirked a brow.

"Wow! Rose. You really are quite blunt. You can see some of it. If you want to see it all, I'd need to be pretty much naked and I'm certain you don't want to see that," he chuckled nervously.

Rose gave a wicked smile to Edward and he paled. He looked at me apprehensively, pleading with his eyes. I held up my hands and giggled. Edward narrowed his eyes and untucked his shirt. He pulled up his tight t-shirt and slightly pulled down his jeans to show Rose the top portion of his tattoo on his hip. She hopped up and moved in for a closer inspection. She lightly ran her fingers along the curve of the top of the tattoo. Edward jumped away. "That

tickles, Rose."

"Sorry, Edward. Did it hurt?" Rose asked.

"Like a son of a bitch. However, I really like how it turned out," Edward said.

"How big is it?"

"It starts right above my hip and goes down to the very top of my thigh. It follows the natural curve of my hip."

"Why did you get it?" Rose pressed.

"My greatest love, up until September, was music. I wanted to commemorate that love with a tattoo. There are also some symbols in the tattoo that represent my mom. I want add a few things, though. I'm probably going to do that over winter break," Edward explained.

"What do you want to add?" I asked.

"You'll have to wait and see, beautiful. Do you want to go out for dinner before our show?" Edward asked.

"Yeah. Let me just grab my purse and my guitar," I dashed into my closet and pulled out my electric guitar.

"Don't bring your purse. Just your ID. I'll pay for you tonight," Edward said with a crooked smirk.

"Edward, you always pay for me," I countered.

"That's always how it's going to be, beautiful. See you later, Rosalie." Edward grabbed my jacket and put it over my shoulders and laced his fingers with mine. He slung my guitar over his shoulder and we walked out to the parking lot. He put my guitar into the trunk and then opened up my door.

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We drove to Peter's Diner which was near the club we were playing at. We met up with Jasper and Emmett in the restaurant. We chatted about the upcoming concert and about Thanksgiving. Emmett and I talked about Christmas with Charlie. Edward got very quiet during that conversation. I knew that he wanted to be with me on Christmas, but he couldn't do it. His parents refused to let him fly out to spend Christmas with me. I was okay with that. We promised to talk on the phone as often as we could.

After we settled our bill, we headed to Eclipse to do a sound check. We just needed to make sure the levels were all good. We also wanted to make sure that all of our equipment was untouched. We met up with the manager of the club and they led us into the main area of the club. The lights were already pulsating. We completed our sound check and headed back into the green room. We sat down on the plush couch and all began our pre-show rituals. We were going on at eight.

Edward got up after about ten minutes of sitting on the couch. He began pacing the small room. He was nervous. I knew he didn't feel like we were ready for this performance. We hadn't prepared enough because of the situation with James and I felt like it was my fault. I began to experience the anxious feeling in my chest and I shot up and ran to the bathroom in the green room. I slammed the door shut and tried to calm my rapidly beating heart. I looked up at my reflection and I looked dazed. I needed to get my emotions under control.

I heard a quiet knock on the bathroom door and I clamped my eyes shut. I didn't want to deal with anyone right now. I needed to do this myself. Whoever was at the door knocked again, "Bella?"

"I'll be out in a minute," I said, trying make my voice sound normal. I took a few more deep breaths and steeled my resolve and went back out into the green room. Edward walked up to me and enveloped me in a tight hug.

"Bella, you're going to do awesome tonight," Edward said into my ear. I nodded and took another deep breath, letting Edward's strong arms and intoxicating scent calm me.

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"Come on, guys. Let's say a quick prayer and head out there," Jasper said with a smile. We all clasped hands and bowed our heads. We all said our silent prayers and headed out on stage.

Emmett sat down behind the drums, Jasper and Edward picked up their guitar and bass, respectively and I went behind the my keyboard. We started our set with "The Pretender," by The Foo Fighters. The lights all swiveled and were on us. The crowd cheered and we fed off of their energy. I looked up from the keyboard and watched Edward as he sang into his microphone. His profile was so strong, his muscles were tense and he made love to his guitar. I licked my lips and quirked my brow at his prowess on stage. He was a true showman. I focused on his body and how he moved as I played. Before I knew it, the song was over and we were moving our next song, "Halo," by Beyonce. I began the introduction and performed the song. I felt Edward's eyes on me the entire time. I kept my eyes closed or focused on the audience. As I sang, I poured all of my emotions into my performance. I sang this song for Edward. He was my angel. He'll always be my angel.

*Remember those walls I built  
Well, baby they're tumbling down  
And they didn't even put up a fight  
They didn't even make up a sound*

*I found a way to let you in  
But I never really had a doubt  
Standing in the light of your halo  
I got my angel now*

*It's like I've been awakened  
Every rule I had you breakin'  
It's the risk that I'm takin'  
I ain't never gonna shut you out*

*Everywhere I'm looking now  
I'm surrounded by your embrace  
Baby I can see your halo*

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*You know you're my saving grace*

*You're everything I need and more  
It's written all over your face  
Baby I can feel your halo  
Pray it won't fade away*

*I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo  
I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo*

*Hit me like a ray of sun  
Burning through my darkest night  
You're the only one that I want  
Think I'm addicted to your light*

*I swore I'd never fall again  
But this don't even feel like falling  
Gravity can't forget  
To pull me back to the ground again*

*Feels like I've been awakened  
Every rule I had you breakin'  
The risk that I'm takin'  
I'm never gonna shut you out*

*Everywhere I'm looking now  
I'm surrounded by your embrace  
Baby I can see your halo  
You know you're my saving grace*

*You're everything I need and more  
It's written all over your face  
Baby I can feel your halo  
Pray it won't fade away*



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*I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo  
I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo*

*I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo  
I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo  
Halo, halo*

*Everywhere I'm looking now  
I'm surrounded by your embrace  
Baby I can see your halo  
You know you're my saving grace*

*You're everything I need and more  
It's written all over your face  
Baby I can feel your halo  
Pray it won't fade away*

*I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo  
I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo*

*I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo  
I can feel your halo halo halo  
I can see your halo halo halo*

At the end of the song, I opened my eyes and looked around the room. I saw Alice and Rose crying in the front row. Edward had turned to face me and his eyes were filled with tears. I mouthed to him "That was for you, baby. I love you." He gave me a smile and leaned across the keyboard and kissed me. The crowd roared and I felt him smile against my lips.

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"I love you more, *il mio cantante*," he whispered. He gave me a lopsided grin and he nodded his head at Emmett. He began a count off and started "Satellite" by Dave Matthews Band.

We finished our set and the crowd went wild. Despite our lack of rehearsal, the performance came together pretty smoothly. We finished our set with "If I Never See Your Face Again," by Maroon 5 and Rihanna. After our final song, the stage went dark and we scrambled off the stage to the green room. When we were safely ensconced in the green room, we all gathered for a group hug. We were interrupted by a knock on the door. Emmett opened the door and the manager walked in with a huge grin on his face.

"You guys are fantastic! I have never, in all of my years of being a club manager, had a local band sound so good. I have a proposition for you," he said.

"What's that?" Edward asked warily.

"That you guys be my house band. You obviously know how to pack a house and the crowd just loves you," the manager beamed.

"What would that entail, if we do decide to be your 'house band?'" Edward pressed.

"You'd play once a week, either on Friday or Saturday and you'd get paid \$500 for each performance, plus a cut of the nightly proceeds, about 5% of what is made from the bar. Here's my card. Think about it. I'll draw up a contract and we'll talk after Thanksgiving," he said.

"Thanks, Kellan," Edward said, looking at the card. "We'll discuss as a band and let you know. However, we are still students and our studies come first. We may not be able to commit to once a week. We will talk about it."

"Fabulous. Is there a phone number I can reach you at?" Kellan asked. He passed Edward a card and he jotted down his cell phone number and email address on the back. "Just pull your vehicles in the back and we'll get the

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busboys help with your equipment." Edward nodded and he handed me his keys. Emmett walked out with me to our cars.

"You did awesome, Isabelly. You never cease to amaze me, baby girl," Emmett said with a dimply grin.

"Thanks, Em. I was afraid I'd botch it up tonight. I was so nervous and anxious. I wanted to get through tonight with no medicine. I don't think I'd be okay if I did."

"Well, you did great. Let's get these cars and get our crap and have some fun tonight!"

I nodded and slid into Edward's car. I readjusted the seats and started the vehicle. I moved the car to the back of the club and Emmett followed me. I popped the trunk and there were a few busboys standing by the back entrance. Jasper was standing with them. I assumed that Edward was on stage monitoring their progress. The guitars were placed in Edward's trunk, as was my keyboard. The larger equipment was placed in Emmett's truck and covered with a tarp. Emmett and I moved the cars back into our parking spots and walked back into the club. We were ushered to the VIP section, where Jasper, Alice, Rose and Edward were waiting for us. There were also a few other Emerson students in the VIP area: Ben and Angela, Tia and her crutches, Mike and Jessica and Tyler and some blonde girl that looked like a fish.

Edward handed me a drink and I took a sip. It was a rum and diet coke. He gave me a lopsided grin and held up his beer. I wrapped my hand around his waist and cuddled into his side. He was a bit sweaty from being on stage but he still smelled good and being close to him made me feel safe. I downed my drink and put it down on the table in the VIP area. I pulled on Edward's hand and nodded to the dance floor. His brow shot up in surprise. I was not usually one to voluntarily dance, but I wanted to let loose and have fun with my boyfriend/fiancé. He put down his drink and laced his fingers with mine. We walked down the stairs and to the center of the dance floor.

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There was a song that I didn't recognize blaring through the speakers. However, it had a good beat and was easy to move to. The lights were pulsating and I looked up at Edward. I began to move my hips seductively and ran my fingers through my hair. He put his large hands around my waist and pulled me flush with his hips. His body moved in conjunction with mine. He positioned his strong thigh in between my legs and he swiveled his hips. Edward leaned down and ran his nose along the shell of my ear, inhaling deeply. I moved my hands up his chest to his neck and played with his hair, tugging it gently.

I removed my hands from his hair and turned away from him and pressed my ass to his hardening cock. Edward groaned and his hands moved to my hips. I moved my body seductively and sensually. I raised my arms above my head and my hands took purchase in his soft, damp hair. My own head tipped back and leaned against his chest. His right hand was splayed across my belly and his other hand was on my hip, trying to control my movements against his crotch.

"You're killing me, here, Bella," he growled.

I looked over my shoulder and gave him a coy smile. I reached one of my hands behind me and I cupped his cock through his jeans. I gently rubbed with my hand and he moaned. His hand that was on my hip, slid between us and stopped my motions. "If you don't stop, Bella, I'm going to drag you into the green room and fuck you senseless."

"What if that is what I want you to do, Edward," I said, pulling my lip between my teeth.

"Fuck. Me."

"Yes, please," I groaned. Edward grabbed my hand and led me through the crowded dance floor. We ran up the stairs to the green room. He took a quick look around and slipped inside, pulling me behind him. He pushed me against the door and he clicked the lock shut. His eyes were wild and he looked at me with such desire. My panties were soaked through at his lustful stare. He put

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his hands on either side of my head and his lips collided with mine. My hands shot to his hair and I grabbed fistfuls. His hands moved from the door and slid down my body. He lightly brushed the outsides of my breasts and I could feel my nipples harden instantly.

I removed my hands from his soft hair and reached behind my head. I untied my halter top and let it fall around my waist. Edward's eyes fell to my bare breasts and his breath hitched. One of his hands cupped my breast and he dipped his head and suckled on the other. My head fell back and I moaned. I opened my eyes and I saw our reflection in the mirror of the green room. Edward's muscles in his back were flexed as he attacked my chest with his expert tongue. I was growing more wet as I watched him assault my breasts. I gently tugged on his hair and he brought his face back up to mine. I cupped his chin and turned his face to the mirror.

His eyes darkened and he looked back at me. I gave him my own crooked smirk and reached for his belt. I quickly undid his belt and the top button of his jeans. Edward pulled away before I could attack his zipper. He moved down to my boots and unzipped them, slipping them off my feet. His deft fingers moved to my own jeans and he undid the button and slowly moved the zipper down. He tugged on my jeans and they were down around my ankles. I stepped out of them and was in nothing but my halter top and my panties. Edward slowly moved up my body, pressing kisses as he went. He was fully standing when he traced the hem of my panties. He slipped his hand into my boy shorts and he groaned. "You're so wet, Bella."

"Only for you, Edward. I've been like this all night. You make me so turned on," I whimpered as he fondled my clit. My hands were on his shoulders and my head was against the door. Edward growled and I felt my panties rip away from my body. He hitched one of my legs around his hip and he plunged two fingers into my wet core, causing me to come immediately. I moved my hands from his shoulders and undid his zipper. I pushed his jeans and boxers down as far as I could.

"I want you to watch as we fuck, Bella. You are so hot; you need to see it," he growled. He bent down and picked me up, wrapping my legs around his waist.

He leaned me against the door and aligned his cock with my entrance. He slid into me forcefully. I watched us in the mirror, in awe of the physical perfection that was Edward. His ass was flexing as he entered my body and his muscles strained in his shirt as he held me up. I couldn't watch any longer, I needed to see my love. I looked into his beautiful green eyes and I kissed him deeply. I moved my kisses to his neck. With each movement he made, I bit down on his neck. He thrust into my hot core with abandon. I felt so full, so complete. One of his hands moved up to my breast and he rolled my nipple as he pounded his cock into me. I could feel my release come. I pulled away from Edward, panting as he continued to move in me. I reached down and pinched the sensitive bundle of nerves in between us. I looked back to the mirror and I could feel my muscles begin to flutter. We were one, complete being. "Come with me, Bella. I need to feel you. I love you, my beautiful girl," he grunted. His words were my undoing. My muscles clenched around his cock and I bit back a scream. Edward muffled my sounds with a searing kiss. He pumped into me a few more times before he found his release, groaning into my mouth. We slid to the floor, still connected and were both panting heavily. I rest my head on his shoulder, breathing in his scent. His arms went around my body, holding me close to his chest.

"I love you, Edward. That was fucking amazing," I breathed.

"Fuck, yeah. However, I don't think my legs will ever work again," he laughed weakly. "I think I need to head to the gym if we keep this up."

"I'll go with you, baby. I like doing things like this," I replied with a quirk of the brow.

"You're insatiable. I've created a monster," Edward groaned.

"I'm only insatiable for you, Edward. I'd like to have you as much as possible," I said, kissing his lips. He gently lifted me off his lap and pulled out of me. I frowned at the loss. Edward pulled up his pants and zipped them up. He darted into the bathroom and grabbed some tissues. He carefully cleaned me with the moist cloths and tossed them into the garbage. He went to grab my panties and gave me a sheepish grin. I went to grab them and he pocketed them. I shook

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my head and pulled my jeans on (sans underwear) and my boots. I took a cursory look in the mirror, blushing as I did so. I wanted to make sure that I didn't have the 'just-fucked' look in my hair. I did, but I really didn't care. I swiped a bottle of water from the green room and chugged it. I tossed another bottle to Edward and he did the same.

Edward took a look in the mirror and his eyes widened. "Fuck, baby."

"What?" I asked.

Edward turned his head and sure enough there was hickey on his neck were I had nibbled. I didn't realize I had bitten down so hard. I blushed and bit my lip. "I'd say I'm sorry but I'm not. Now, you're marked as mine, Edward. You've left enough love bites on my thighs, it's only fair game."

"You can cover your thighs, Bella. I can't cover my neck unless I wear a turtleneck. Shit," he grumbled.

"Edward, relax. I'm certain Alice or Rose or me have some makeup. We can cover it for you," I giggled.

"Um, no. I think I'll just deal. It is hot though. You marked me. Sweet," he said with a lascivious grin. He laced his fingers with mine and we walked out of the green room and back into the club. We headed back up to the VIP area and sat down with our friends. Alice gave me a wink and I blushed. I rested my head on Edward's shoulder and enjoyed the rest of the night.

**A/N: Up next - Thanksgiving preparation, hot tub fun, and Domward.**

**Breaking Midnight's set list:**

**" The Pretender," Foo Fighters**

**" Halo," Beyonce**

**" Satellite," Dave Matthews Band**

**" Hero," Chad Kroger**

**" Need You Now," Lady Antebellum**

**" This Ain't a Scene," Fall Out Boy**

**" There Will Come a Day," Faith Hill**

**" Rhythm of Love," Plain White Ts**

**" Steve McQueen," Sheryl Crow**

**" Spotlight," Mutemath**

**" Lucky," Jason Mraz**

**" Ain't No Rest for the Wicked," Cage the Elephant**

**" Love is a Battlefield," Pat Benatar**

**" Never Too Late," Three Days Grace**

**" Teenage Dream," Katy Perry**

**" Just the Way You Are," Bruno Mars**

**" If I Never See Your Face Again," Maroon 5**



# Black Wednesday

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 39: Black Wednesday

### EPOV

Bella and I went back to the VIP area of Eclipse after our rendezvous in the green room.

*What is it about this girl that makes me into this sex addict? Not that I'm complaining, but damn!*

We spent the rest of the night hanging out with our friends and siblings. I knew that Alice suspected something went down when she gave Bella a wink. She hid her face into my shoulder and I could feel the warmth in her cheeks through my shirt. I kissed the top of her head and smiled. We all eventually went back down on the dance floor and moved in a great big circle. I made sure that Bella and I kept a respectable distance (an inch, at least) from each other. As much as I wanted a repeat performance, I'd rather make love with my girlfriend in the confines of my own home...eh, who am I kidding? I want to make love to Bella ALL the time. No matter the place.

I ended up having a few more beers and told Bella that she was going to drive back to campus. She nodded and kept sipping her water. At around one, we decided to head back to campus. Bella still had my car keys and slipped on her coat. We linked our hands and headed out to the car. I opened the door for my beautiful girl and slid into the passenger seat. Bella started my car and eased it out of the parking spot. As we drove, Jasper texted me.

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*Alice and I are heading to Chez Cullen. Emmett is staying with Rosalie. The room is yours, Eddie-boy - Jas*

*Thanks, man. See you tomorrow - E*

*Good show! I know you were worried. - Jas*

*It was a good show. I wasn't worried about the show itself, but my girl was my concern - E*

*She kicked ass, like always. - Jas*

*I'll let her know. Later. - E*

*Later - Jas*

Bella was humming along with a song that was on the radio as we headed back to Emerson. I reached across the console and grabbed her hand. I laced my fingers with hers and brought her tiny hand to my mouth. I pressed kisses on each of her knuckles, then her finger tips and ending with the palm of her hand. I inhaled at her pulse point and enjoyed her strawberry/freesia/lavender scent that drove me wild.

"I love you, beautiful. You did awesome tonight. Jasper asked that I tell you that," I said with a grin.

"So did you, Edward. You are so freaking hot on stage. Damn," she chuckled.

"Okay, sure," I said rolling my eyes.

"Edward, you always give me shit about not seeing myself clearly. Now it's my turn. You are so confident on stage; you exude sex appeal. The way you sing into your mic, the way you move your body on stage, the way you handle your guitar, it is all fucking hot. I personally get the best view because I can see your profile and the way your muscles tense when you move and your fine ass. I'm getting all hot and bothered by it just thinking about it," Bella said, giving me a

wicked grin.

I felt my cheeks flame up and I knew I was blushing. Alright, I'm attractive. I take good care of my body. I don't drink a ton and god forbid don't smoke. Though I have tried and I hated it. "Thank you, baby. I really don't know what to say," I replied humbly.

"You're welcome," Bella said with a smile and pulled into the parking lot of Patterson Hall. She eased my Volvo into a spot and turned off the engine. "Thank you for everything you've done for me the past couple of days. I know I haven't been the best person to be around lately, but I do appreciate your patience, kindness and love. I can't even imagine what I would have done if you were not with me."

"Bella, I'm going to always be there. I'll never leave your side, unless you have to fly back to Seattle for Christmas," I teased.

"I'm sorry I live on the opposite end of the country, Edward. However, I do want to see my family for the holidays. We'll see each other the day after Christmas and you said you're staying through January 3rd, right?" Bella griped.

"Yep. We fly back to New York on the third and move into our place on the fifth. When you move out of the dorms, you can leave your stuff in our home. We have an area in the basement that we use as storage. We'll put all of your stuff there," I said with a grin, easing myself out of the car.

Bella scrambled out of the driver's seat and hugged her body in her black pea coat. I wrapped my arms around her and pulled her to my chest. "Thank you, Edward. I don't deserve you."

"Yes, you do. I love you, baby," I said into her hair.

"I love you too. But, I'm flipping cold. Let's get inside."

Bella turned and scampered into the dorm and jogged behind her.

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*I definitely need to go to the gym. My legs are like fucking rubber.*

I told Bella that my room was ours for the night. Bella went into her dorm room to change and wash her face. She said she'd meet me upstairs. I hopped in the shower to hose myself down. I was pretty grimy after the show and the extracurricular activities did not help with stench I had going on. I quickly washed my hair and body. I pulled a towel around my waist and picked up my clothes. I threw them into my hamper in the closet and pulled on a pair of boxers. I was running my towel through my hair when I heard a knock on the door. I opened it up and there was Bella, wearing a black strappy tank top and a pair of black and turquoise blue silky pajama bottoms. Her hair was pulled back into a low ponytail and she had on her glasses. I ushered her inside and closed the door.

"You showered?" Bella asked, quirkling a brow over her frames.

"I felt nasty," I replied, scrunching my nose. "I hate the sweaty feeling that you get from being under the hot lights and not being able to remove the funk immediately afterward."

"If it's any consolation, I did the same. However, I needed to for different reasons. Someone, who shall remain nameless, pilfered my underwear and I had to deal with the aftermath of some serious fucking," she teased, poking me in the chest.

"Admit, you loved it," I chuckled.

"The act, yes. The aftermath with NO UNDERWEAR, no."

"You are the sexiest creature on the planet. I can't help it if you are and I have to ravish you," I said, crossing to my beautiful girl. I ran my hands down her back and grabbed her ass. She squeaked and her hands landed on my chest. The tingle that I always associate with Bella touching me was accentuated by her hands on my bare skin. I leaned down and pressed my lips to hers and kissed her with all of my heart. Her hands moved up my chest and weaved themselves into my damp hair. She opened her mouth and I slid my tongue inside,

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caressing hers. She moaned but pulled away.

"I don't know about you, but I need some sleep. I'm also a little sore," she said, her cheeks blushing.

"I'm sorry beautiful," I said sheepishly.

"No! Not that way, my legs and honestly my back. If you do decide to go to the gym, I will be joining you. I'm definitely out of shape and need to do something about it," she giggled.

"Got it. Let's get our out-of-shape asses into bed," I said, throwing her over my shoulder.

"Edward! Put me down! I just said I was sore, you dork."

"I'm just starting my workout routine with some strength training," I replied, smacking her butt. She pinched my sides and giggled. I set her down on the bed and she curled up under the covers. I settled in and she laid her head on my chest. "I love you, Bella. Sleep well, beautiful."

She yawned and stretched her tiny body. "I love you, too, baby. Good night."

I reached up and turned off the light on my headboard and we both drifted off to sleep, holding each other.

xx LC xx

I woke up to feather light touches on my chest. They moved further down my body and slipped into my boxers. I hummed and shifted in the bed. I felt the touches move to my cock and it perked to life. I opened my eyes and saw Bella, with her hand in my shorts, gently caressing my dick. She was slowly pumping and massaging it. I lifted my hips and with one hand, pulled my boxers down. Bella assisted with the other side. She shifted down on the bed and she nibbled on my hipbones. I growled at her touch and my hips bucked reflexively. She looked up at me through her insanely long lashes and smiled

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against my skin. She moved her lips to the tip of my cock. She pressed a kiss to it and hummed.

She wrapped her lips around my dick and swirled her tongue around the head. With her hands she continued to pump my shaft and massage my balls.

"Holy shit, Bella. That feels so good," I moaned, gently running my fingers through her hair.

She released my dick from her mouth and gave me a smile. "Want to try something?"

"Anything with you," I said with a smirk. She sat up and took off her tank top and tossed it on the ground. She then slipped off her pajamas and the joined her shirt on the floor. Bella was gloriously naked in my bed. I kicked off my boxers and tossed them on the floor.

Bella blushed and looked down at her hands. "What, baby?"

"I don't know if I can do this," she mumbled.

"I'm confused, Bella. What are you talking about?" I asked, quirkling a brow.

"69?"

My brows shot to my hairline. I'd always wanted to try it but never did. I felt my cock harden at the prospect of Bella sitting on my face and going down on her while she did that to me. I patted her thighs and she tentatively moved so she was straddling my head. I could smell how turned on she was. It was glistening down her thighs and I wanted, no, needed a taste. Bella settled above me and I ran my tongue along her slit. She bent down and pulled my cock in between her lips.

With my hands, I spread her beautiful, pink pussy. I plunged a finger into her slick folds and pulled her clit between my lips. She moaned against my cock and began pumping more fiercely. I added a second finger and swirled my

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tongue around her clit. She relaxed her jaw and forced me farther into her mouth. My hips bucked at her hot tongue running along my shaft. I curled my fingers in her body and she began rocking against my hands and face.

I began to feel the coil in my belly tighten. I wanted to be buried in Bella when I came. I pulled my face away from her pussy and nudged her legs. She sat up and I wiggled out from underneath her. I grasped her arms and had her straddle my legs. Her wet heat was positioned over my cock.

"I want to be inside you when I come, beautiful," I whispered. I pushed her down onto my cock, relishing her warm, tight pussy around me. I sat up and was nose-to-nose with my girl. I rotated my hips and pushed deeper into her. Her hands moved to my hair and she kissed me with abandon. Her hips moved with mine, pushing my cock deeper into her.

"Edward," she moaned against my lips.

I wrapped my arms around her and gripped her ass. I could feel her muscles move against my cock. She was close. "Come with me, Bella. I want to hear you scream my name," I growled.

"Oh, god. Faster!" She said leaning back on my legs. I moved my hips at a breakneck speed, obliging her request. I reached between us and pinched her clit with my hand. "Edward! Oh! God!" Her muscles clenched and she screamed. I thrust into her a few more times and my dick twitched, spilling into her.

I fell back onto the pillows, bringing Bella with me. She lay on my chest, still connected to me in the most intimate of ways. She pressed a kiss above my heart, "I love you, handsome."

"I love you more, beautiful." Bella sat up and moved off my lap. She got up and went to the bathroom with her clothes. I watched my beautiful girl as she moved gracefully through the dorm room.

"Are you done ogling, Edward?" she teased as she pulled on her glasses.

"No. I'll never be done ogling," I sassed.

"When do we need to be at your parents' house? I need to pack and do some other things," Bella said.

"Let's shoot for leaving here by noon? I need to pack, gather my laundry and get my books for some studying," I said with a crooked smirk.

She took a glance at the clock and nodded. She hopped onto the bed and straddled my legs. "Love you, handsome. See you later," she said as she kissed me, swiveling her hips over my cock. She got off me and bounced out of the room.

"Tease!" I rolled my eyes and got out of bed and pulled on my boxers. I grabbed my duffel and started tossing in clothes. I grabbed a pair of jeans and put them on. I was still working on packing when a bleary-eyed Emmett strolled through the door.

"I hate my sister," Emmett grumbled. He clambered into his bed with a huff and pulled his pillow over his head.

"Why do you hate your sister?" I asked.

"She's the devil. She dragged me out of bed with my Rosie, BY MY EAR, and pushed me out of the room. I. Hate. My. Sister."

"Do I even want to know what you were doing with Rose?" I pressed, my face scrunched up.

"Absolutely nothing. We were sleeping. Or rather, I was. Rosie and I are taking things slowly, for obvious reasons. However, my devil-sister said I was snoring and threw me out," he grumbled.

"Em, I hate to burst your bubble, but you do snore. Loudly. That is one of the reasons why I'm moving out over Christmas break. I need my beauty rest. I get the snoring in stereophonic sound with both you AND Jasper. I'd take Bella's



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sleep talking any day."

"You just can't handle the gas," Emmett said, farting to emphasize his point.

"You are disgusting, Emmett. I can't believe you and Bella came from the same womb," I said as I plugged my nose. His stench was permeating the room. I went into my desk and pulled out my handy Febreze bottle and sprayed, trying to dissipate the foulness that was Emmett. He let out a guffaw and farted a few more times. "Emmett! Stop it. You'll kill me if you keep it up. I don't want to die at the age of twenty from your noxious fumes. Fuck."

"What? Like your shit don't stink? It's nature, Eddie."

"It's gross and nasty. Go to the bathroom if you gotta do that, please."

"Whatever, man. I got to shower any way," Emmett said, getting out of his bed. He walked past me and farted as he did. "One to enjoy while I clean myself."

I smacked his head and sprayed my air freshener. "Four weeks. I can survive four weeks and then co-habitation bliss with my girl," I muttered to myself.

I busied myself with finishing packing my bag and then turned to my laundry. I took off my sheets from my bed and tossed them into the laundry basket. I put my bag, laundry basket and guitar case by the door. I hopped on my computer and checked my email. I had an email from Garrett.

*To: Edward Cullen*

*From: Garrett Sisko*

*Re: Collage Concert*

*Dear Edward,*

*I hope things are going well with you and Ms. Swan. She is such a lovely girl. You are a lucky guy. If I wasn't married, and about fifteen years her*

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*senior.....Just kidding. Seriously.*

*Anyway, that would be weird. I'm contacting you about a rehearsal schedule for the Collage Concert. I know that you have finals that week. We are planning a mass rehearsal on the Friday evening before the concert. I can trust you that you will be prepared for the concert and all we need to do is get tempos situated. The concert itself will be on December 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. Call time will be at 6 for each night. If you could be at the choir room for warm ups and touch ups that would be fantastic. If Bella can come, the groups would really enjoy seeing her.*

*In regards to payment, for the one rehearsal and two performances, the choir boosters is going to cut you a check for \$450. That includes mileage/gas money. Call me if this doesn't work for you and we'll work something else out. Have a great Thanksgiving and I'll see you in a couple of weeks!*

*Yours in music,*

*Garrett*

I quickly typed out a reply saying that the schedule and the fees were okay. I blind copied Bella on my reply so she could possibly come with me for at least the rehearsal. I wasn't sure when she was heading out to Forks after finals. If she could swing it, I'd love for her to come to the concerts with me. However, if she was flying out, that wouldn't work. I'd need to figure out her schedule.

I glanced at the clock and saw that it was nearly noon. I shut down my computer, placed it in my laptop bag and grabbed the charger. I carried my bags and laundry basket to my car and placed them into the trunk. I dashed up the stairs and knocked on Bella's door. Rosalie opened up and ushered me inside.

"Hey Rose. I heard there was a little drama in here this morning," I chuckled.

"It was quite humorous. I was trying, unsuccessfully mind you, to extricate myself from Emmett's vice-like grip for like a half hour. I really needed to pee.

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He was snoring like a chain saw. When Bella came in, I squeaked for her help and she grabbed Emmett's ear and physically pulled him out of bed. It was fucking hysterical. I didn't really see the aftermath because I darted to the bathroom, but from what I heard, Emmett was pissed."

"That's my girl! Where is she, by the way?" I asked, looking around the room.

"She's finishing getting ready in the bathroom. She told me that if you came down to ask if you could carry her bag to your car. She also wanted to bring her laundry basket," Rosalie said as she pointed to Bella's bed. It was stripped clean and her sheets were on top of her clothes. I put her bag over my shoulders and picked up her laundry basket. I went downstairs and put her bag and laundry basket in my trunk next to mine. As I was heading back into Patterson, Emmett was walking out to his truck with his bag and Rose's duffel. I took Rose's bag and helped him put their stuff into Emmett's truck.

Bella and Rose were in their room just chatting when Emmett and I came back from our cars. Bella gave Rose a hug and gave her a huge smile. They noticed us grabbed their coats. I picked up Bella's messenger bag and computer bag and waited for her. She picked up her purse, phone and phone charger and ambled over to my side. I wrapped my arm around her waist and kissed her temple.

"You ready?" I asked Emmett.

"Yep. Let's get our tryptophan on!" he said, rubbing his hands together. Bella chuckled and rolled her eyes. We walked out to the car and Bella settled into the passenger side. I started the car and headed to my parents' home, with Emmett and Rosalie in Emmett's truck following us.

xx LC xx

We got to my parents' house and there was no one there. I carried my bag and Bella's bag up to my room. I pointed Emmett in the direction of the guest bedroom that he and Rosalie were staying in. I went back downstairs and saw a note on the kitchen counter.

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*Dear Edward, Bella, Emmett and Rosalie,*

*Make yourselves at home. Edward, be sure to be a good host. Jasper, Alice and I went to the grocery store to get provisions for the big dinner tomorrow. Carlisle is at the hospital and should be back by dinner tonight. There's some cold cuts in the fridge if you all want some lunch.*

*Love you all,*

*Esme "Mama C"*

Bella came into the kitchen and plopped down in one of the stools by the island. She leaned her head on my shoulder and I kissed her head. "Did you get your email today?"

"Yep. I'm flying out early on the 16th with Emmett. I can come to both nights of the concerts. I can be your page-turner," she giggled.

"We make an awesome team, Swan," I laughed.

"Damn right, Cullen. Remember who keeps you in line," she teased, punching me in the shoulder. I feigned like I was hurt and rubbed my bicep. She rolled her eyes and kissed where she punched me. "Better, you big baby?"

"A little. I have another pain," I said with a quirk of the brow.

"Where? I'll kiss it and make it better," she replied.

I looked down to my crotch and gave her a lascivious smile. She really punched me and hopped off the stool. Bella went to the fridge and got a bottle of water. She held another bottle up for me and I nodded. I took my water and dragged Bella to the living room to the grand piano. I sat her down and started noodling around on the keys, just letting the music flow through my fingers. I faintly heard Emmett and Rosalie come into the living room. They sat down on the large couch in the room, holding each other's hands. Bella's hands moved to the keyboard and began to play an intricate counter melody to what I was

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doing. Our fingers moved in perfect harmony, like the song that we were improvising. I slowly morphed the music into Bella's lullaby. She never missed a beat; she kept weaving harmonies and counter melodies with what I was playing. I reached the end of the lullaby and lifted my hands. Bella held her chord and did the same.

"Holy shit," Emmett whispered.

"Tell me about it," Rose concurred. "Did you guys write that?"

"Um, no. Made it up as we went along?" I replied. Bella looked at me and nodded. Her eyes were dark with desire and her features were pulled up into her own crooked smirk.

"Holy shit!" Emmett boomed.

"Tell me about it! You both are fucking virtuosos," Rose breathed.

"No, we're not," Bella said, blushing.

"Yes, you are. I doubt there are many people in the world who could do that," Rose pressed.

"Elizabeth could," Carlisle said with a grin.

"You heard that?" I asked turning to face my dad.

"Yes. It was beautiful, Edward and Bella. My sister was an amazing musician who could create the most intricate pieces of music. She could also improvise with anybody. Rose, you're right. Not many people can do that. Only a musical genius can. Like Elizabeth. Like you, Bella. And especially you, Edward. I was so wrong in forcing you to be a pre-med major. I am so sorry. I can see how music completes you, how you need it. I'm so proud of you, son," Carlisle said, gently rubbing my shoulder. He leaned down and kissed my forehead. "I love you, Edward. You remind me of my sister every day. Of how much I miss her. You are so much like her."

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I didn't know what to say. I just sat on the piano bench and stared at Carlisle. Bella poked my side and I shook my head. I stood up and gave Carlisle a hug and he returned it. "Thank you, Dad. I love you too."

He pulled back and gave me a smile. "Well, I came in here to let you know that your mom is on her way home with a boatload of groceries. Emmett and Edward, you've been recruited to help unload."

I nodded and Emmett got up from the couch. We headed into the garage and waited for my mom, Alice and Jasper to get back from the store. My mom's Range Rover pulled into the driveway and Alice popped out and skipped up to me. She gave me a kiss on the cheek and skipped into the house. The back of my mom's SUV opened and there was a shitload of bags. Jasper grabbed some and I looked at Emmett. He shrugged and we started unloading the car. Esme ruffled my hair as she passed and she breezed into the kitchen. It took us four trips to bring all of the groceries. The girls were putting the groceries away save for the ingredients for the 'Bella Brownies.' After dinner, Bella was going to make the brownies for dessert for tomorrow, in addition to the multiple pies that my mom got and random pastries.

"Okay, so here's the plan of attack," Esme began. " We're going to make the desserts tonight and then tomorrow will be turkey and all the trimmings. I'm planning on pizza for tonight and I'm going to order it in a little bit. Why don't you kids go into the hot tub until dinner?"

I nodded and slid off my stool. Bella's eyes widened and she squeaked. "What's wrong, beautiful?"

"I don't have a swimsuit," she said.

"No big deal, Bella. I have tons. You can borrow one of mine," Alice chirped. "Come on! Let's go pick one out." Alice grabbed Bella's hand and dragged her up to her room. Rose followed them. Jasper, Emmett and I went up to my room to change into our suits.

## La Cantante

"Hey, Edward. Do you have an extra suit? Like Bella, I don't have one. I didn't think to bring it," Emmett said, nervously. I pulled a suit from my drawer and tossed it to him. I slipped into my bathroom and stripped off my clothes. I put my swimsuit on and a wife beater. I grabbed a couple of towels and headed down to the patio. I slipped on a coat and some shoes and took off the cover of the hot tub. I turned on the jets and slipped into the hot water. Jasper ran from the house and jumped in.

"It's fucking cold!"

"Jas, it's almost winter. Of course, it's cold," I laughed. Emmett opened the patio door and slid into the hot tub. He sighed and dunked his head into the water. We sat in silence waiting for the girls to come out from Alice's room. About five minutes later, the patio door opened. Rose came out first. She was wearing a red bikini with white flowers decorating it. Emmett's eyes nearly popped out of his head when he saw her. Alice came out next. She was wearing a simple black tankini with some lime green accents. Bella came out last wearing a Wedgwood blue colored bikini with some pale blue accents on the bottoms. My mouth watered at Bella in a bikini. She was absolutely gorgeous.

*Mine.*

"So, I was thinking we could play a game," Alice chirped.

We all groaned. "Oh, come on! It'll be fun. Truth or Dare?"

"Alice, I need to be completely hammered to play Truth or Dare," Rose laughed. "Maybe later. Let's just enjoy the water and relax."

"Ugh, fine. However, we will be playing Truth or Dare before the end of the weekend!"

I pulled Bella into my lap and traced patterns on her legs under the water. She leaned back against my chest and closed her eyes. Alice pressed a few buttons and some light jazz flowed over us and we just relaxed listening to music.

xx LC xx

We ate our dinner and Bella made her brownies. I stuck my finger into the batter and that was just amazing. I couldn't wait to taste the finished product. After that, we all settled into the family room to watch a movie. We decided on *Inception* as Jasper and Rosalie hadn't seen it. We all went upstairs to go to bed afterward. The girls decided to get up early and help Mom with the Thanksgiving meal.

I followed Bella up to my room and I shut and locked the door. Bella went into her bag and pulled out something and disappeared into the bathroom. I walked over to my dresser and lit the sandalwood candles. I turned off the overhead light and the room was bathed in a flickering candlelit glow. I took off my shirt and unbuttoned my jeans. I plugged in my iPod into my sound dock and found the playlist I wanted. I sat down on the bed and waited for my girl.

After an immeasurable amount of time, I heard the bathroom door click open. Bella walked out and she was wearing a black silk nightie. Her hair was pulled away from her face and she held a black silk tie in her hands.

"I have one rule, Edward. You have to do everything I say. No questions. Do you understand?" Bella demanded.

*Fuck. Me.*

**A/N: Slight change of plans...a dominating Bella is coming out to play. Sorry for the short chapter. I am having a bit of writers block. If you have a suggestion....leave a review. If you love the story...leave a review. If you hate the story...leave a review. If you want to discuss politics...never mind :).**



# Thanksgiving

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 40: Thanksgiving

### BPOV

"I have one rule, Edward. You have to do everything I say. No questions. Do you understand?" I demanded.

Edward's eyes widened and he nodded minutely. I walked toward and gestured for him to stand up. He got up off the bed and I pointed to the center of his bedroom. "Take off your clothes, Edward." His shirt was already off and his jeans were unbuttoned. He slowly unzipped his fly and lowered his jeans down his long legs. Edward then hooked his thumbs onto his boxers and slid them down as well. I sauntered around him, lightly rubbing my fingers along his skin. I could see goose bumps rise up where I touched. I scratched my fingernails along his spine and traced his tattoo. His breathing was ragged and his cock was getting harder. "You're beautiful, Edward."

"Thank you, Bella," he breathed, looking into my eyes. "You are the most beautiful creature in the world to me."

I smiled and ran my fingers along his jaw line. "Kneel down, Edward." He gracefully sank to the plush floor, onto his knees. I took the black silk tie I had in my hands and covered his eyes. He took a sharp inhale of breath. I tied the blindfold tightly around his face. "Do you trust me, Edward?" echoing his words from a month ago.

"With my life. With my soul. With everything, Bella," he replied.

## La Cantante

"Good," I breathed into his ear, licking the shell. I ghosted my fingers through his hair, lightly tugging on the bronze strands. I moved my hands to his strong shoulders and I stood behind him. I ran my hands along his collarbones and down his back, kissing intermittently as I moved down his body. He was still kneeling. "What should I do with you?" I purred.

"Anything you want, Bella. I'm yours. Completely."

*Oh, the possibilities.*

I stood back up and roughly grabbed his hair, pulling his head back. He gasped and his dick twitched. I ran my tongue along the column of his neck, stopping to suck on my mark from Tuesday. "You're mine, Edward. I've marked you and you're mine."

"Always, Bella. I'll always be yours. Please," he begged.

"Please, what, Edward? What do you want?" I breathed as I released his hair. I bit down on his earlobe and moved my hands to his chest, toying with his nipples.

"You. Only you. *Always* you," he confessed. He raised his hands and covered mine, lacing our fingers together. He lifted my left hand and kissed the palm.

"You have me, Edward. Always," I cooed, unlinking our fingers. "Get up." He stood back up and I moved so I was in front of him. I placed my hands on his chest and gently pushed backwards, toward the bed. He stopped when his legs hit the base of the bed. "Get on the bed and lay back, Edward." He sat down and moved back on the bed.

When he was situated in the center of the bed, I climbed onto the bed and straddled his waist, not putting my body in contact with his. I slid my hand down my body and I circled my clit with my middle finger. I could feel how this turning me on. I slipped the same finger into my dripping wet pussy and held back a moan. I removed my finger from my body and moved it to his lips. "Lick, Edward." His pink tongue tentatively licked what was in front of him.

## La Cantante

When he realized what it was, he pulled my finger between his lips and began sucking. I pulled my finger back, "Just a taste, Edward." He whimpered as I removed my finger from his lips. I moved my body so I was on his left side and I pressed feather-light kisses to his body. I started at his jaw and moved to his neck, down to his collarbones, each of his ribs, his nipples, his hips, down his thighs, his knees and ending on the tops of his feet. I moved to his right side and mirrored the action I did on his left. With each kiss, he moved on the bed, aching for more.

*Not yet. Soon, baby.*

After I kissed his body, I traced my fingers along each ridge of his muscles and crease in skin. I purposely avoided his cock, as to build the anticipation. When I reached his hips, they bucked. "So squirmy, Edward. Do you want me to touch something?" I purred.

"You know what I want you to touch," he growled. "Please, Bella. You're torturing me."

"All in good time, Edward. You'll get your wish," I replied seductively. I slipped my hand between my legs and repeated my actions from before, offering Edward a taste. However, it was much shorter this time. He started to get up and I pushed my hand to his chest. "I didn't tell you to get up, Edward. Stay on the bed, or we stop. Are we clear?"

"Oh, God! Yes, Bella," he moaned. He sank back into the pillows and he continued to squirm. I leaned down and settled my body between his legs. I licked his tattoo, tracing each black line that was on his skin. With my other hand, I idly traced patterns on his other leg. He was whimpering and his hands moved to my head. I decided that he was 'tortured' enough and I kissed my way to his cock. With my hand, I ran my fingers from hipbone to hipbone. I eventually placed my hand on his cock, circling his shaft. He took a sharp intake of breath. "Fuck!"

*Yes!*

## La Cantante

He was so hard, but so soft. His cock felt like a piece of steel covered in the softest velvet. I ran my hand over the tip, spreading the pre-cum that had accumulated at the head. He groaned and put his hand over mine. "Please, Bella," he pleaded, his voice sounding raspy and desperate for some form of release. I removed my hand and gave the tip of his dick a sensual lick. I wrapped my lips around his perfect cock and pushed it into my mouth. He tasted so good. His skin was so soft. I kept pushing his dick further into my mouth until it hit the back of my throat. I relaxed my jaw and eased him further.

*Thank God for no gag reflex.*

I slowly moved my lips and tongue back up his shaft and released his dick. I spread his legs further apart and pulled one of his balls into my mouth. It felt so different from his cock. With my hand, I was pumping his member, using the lubrication of my saliva. "Bella! Ungh!"

"You like this, Edward?" I asked, licking the tip of his cock.

"You have absolutely no idea how much I'm loving this," he rasped. "More, please!"

"Hmmm," I replied as I plunged his cock into my mouth. I scraped my teeth along the bottom of his shaft and I massaged his balls with my hands. I began to bob my head at a faster tempo and his hips moved with me. With my finger tips, I caressed the skin beneath his balls and his hips bucked. Using my arm, I restrained his lower body to the best of my ability. I moved my head faster and pumped with my free hand.

"Oh, God! Bella. Don't stop. That feels fucking amazing," he roared.

I removed my lips from his dick, "You have to be quiet, Edward. I don't want to have to gag you," I hummed. He groaned and put a pillow over his head. I put my mouth back on his cock and resumed my previous actions. I could feel him get harder and I knew he was close. I pumped my hand and moved my other hand to his balls, massaging them with some more force. I scraped my

teeth and deep throated his cock. I heard Edward moan from behind his pillow and one of his hands shot to my head. He weaved his fingers through my hair and gently nudged me to move faster. I complied with his request and his body began squirming and moving. I looked up at him and he had removed his pillow and he was breathing erratically.

"Bella! Shit, I'm going...fuck!" he breathed. His hips swiveled and his dick twitched in my mouth. I felt the spray of cum slide down my throat. I kept pumping and nibbling along his cock until he was done with his release. I removed my hands and mouth from his cock and sat back up. I crawled up his body and untied the blindfold that covered his emerald green eyes. He blinked a few times and when he focused on me, he pounced.

He pinned me down onto the bed with his body. "You are the fucking hottest creature in the universe. You are in for the most Earth-shattering orgasm, ever," he said. His eyes gazed into mine and he leaned down, covering my lips with his. His tongue plunged into my mouth. "Fuck, I can taste myself on your tongue, Bella. You're fucking amazing," he growled into my mouth. I moaned and tugged on his hair. His hand roughly moved down my body, pulling my nightie up off my body. It was a black silk nightie that had a lot of lace and left little to imagination. He sat back on his haunches and pulled me up with him. Edward ripped the nightie from my overheated body and tossed it onto the floor. He wrapped his fingers around my neck and eased me back onto the bed. His other hand moved to my breast and he grabbed the mound of flesh, pinching the nipple. "You're so fucking perfect."

His hand moved down further on my body and he reached between my legs. His fingers reached my slick folds. "You're dripping. Holy shit." I moaned at his voice. It was pure, unadulterated sex and lust wrapped in a velvet cocoon. He removed his mouth from mine and kissed down my body. He reached the apex of my thighs and he stared for a moment. He ran his finger up and down my slit. My hips moved reflexively against his touch. He looked up at me and he spread my legs as far as they would go, baring my most private place to him. He attacked my clit with his teeth and I let out a yelp. He plunged two fingers into my core and began pumping his arm. My hips rolled at his ministrations. I moved one of my hands to his head and the other to his hair,

gently yanking on his bronze locks. I looked down at him as he was between my legs. His eyes gazed into mine, through his lashes as he went down on me. He pulled my clit into his teeth and nibbled. I bucked my hips and groaned. He added a third finger and curled his fingers in my body. It was too much. The coil in my belly was close to springing.

"Edward," I moaned. "I'm so close. Make me cum, baby."

He pumped into me with ferocity and he hummed against my body, causing vibrations to move through my core. He bit down on my clit and that was my undoing. I pulled a pillow over my face and I screamed. He kept his lips and fingers on me as I rode out my orgasm. I removed the pillow and looked down at Edward. He moved up my body and pressed a kiss to my lips. I could taste myself on his lips and it was so hot. He pulled away, "Get on your hands and knees, Bella."

I quickly complied and he entered me from behind. As soon as he slid into my body, I came again. He rocked into my body and his hands moved to my breasts. I leaned down and reach down between my legs and felt our connection. I moved my hips with Edward's. He was grunting as he moved within me. "You are so amazing, Bella. I love you."

"I love you so much, Edward. Oh, God!" I cried. He grabbed my hair and pulled my head back. I moved so my back was flush with his chest. I turned my head and kissed his lips. His other hand moved to my sensitive nub and he rubbed it with his fingers.

"You are so tight, Bella. Shit, I'm going to come again. I need to feel you," he pleaded. His hand rubbed my clit and I raised my hands to my breasts. I rocked my hips against his and I could feel my muscles clench.

"Edward. Harder, please," I begged. He released my hair and braced himself against the headboard and rammed into me harder. I pinched my clit and I felt my pussy clamp down on his cock. I let out a silent scream and Edward slammed into me a few more times before he found his second release with a moan. He collapsed against me and rested his head on my back. His chest was

covered with sweat and we both were breathing heavy.

"Holy shitballs," he breathed against my skin, "That was fucking insane." He pressed a kiss to my back and moved up to my neck. He pulled out and I whimpered at the loss. I felt truly complete when Edward is in me. It was like he was created just for my body. He wrapped his strong arms around my waist and pulled me to his chest, spooning with me. "You are amazing, outstanding, perfect and wonderful, Bella. I love you with all of my heart, all of my soul and all of my body. I'm yours forever."

"Edward, you are truly the most wonderful man on this planet. I will always love you. For now and for forever," I replied. "God, we are so cheesy."

"I'm thinking we are Romano cheesy. I fucking love it. I love you," Edward laughed.

"I love you too, Cheeseboy," I giggled. I looked at the clock and groaned. "I do need to sleep. I need to be up in a matter of hours to help your mom with Thanksgiving."

"Sleep is good. You drained me, beautiful," he said, sleepily. I got up and went to grab my nightie. Edward caught my waist. "Where are you going?"

"Getting my nightgown," I said.

"No way. You're sleeping nekkid. I love you nekkid," he said with a crooked grin.

"Fine, dork. Can I at least blow out the candles?"

"I suppose," he grumbled, releasing me. I got up and blew out the candles that were lit around the room. Edward pulled down the covers of his bedding and settled between the sheets. I crawled in and curled up next to him, laying my head on his chest. I pressed a kiss above his heart and closed my eyes.

"I love you, Cheeseboy."

"I love you too, Romanogirl. Sleep tight."

xx LC xx

I woke up the next morning to the sun shining into Edward's bedroom. It bathed his bed with a warmth and light that made it feel like heaven. Waking up in Edward's arms was the closest thing to being heaven on Earth. I watched Edward as he slept, the sun's rays made it look like he was sparkling. His hair captured all different highlights of blonde, brown, bronze, copper, and red. His face was relaxed and his mouth was slightly open. A few small snores escaped his mouth and his lips twitched. I traced his cheekbones and his nose scrunched up a bit. I pressed a kiss to his jaw and I removed myself from his embrace. I went into my bag and pulled out a pair of sweats (the nice velour kind) and a black long sleeved henley. I also got a bra and some panties and scampered into the shower.

I turned on the shower and quickly washed my body and hair with the shampoo and body wash left in there. I really like the Philosophy stuff that Esme left in the bathrooms. I may have to get some on my own. I gave my legs and pits a quick swipe with a razor and finished my shower. I pulled a towel off the rack and wrapped my body in the huge sheet. I popped in my contacts and brushed my hair. I fingered in some mousse and decided to let it air-dry today. I slathered on some lotion onto my arms and legs after I put on some deodorant. I also sprayed some lavender-scented body spray. I pulled on my black lacy demi-bra and the matching black thong. I put on my red velour sweat bottoms and my shirt. I lightly applied some makeup and headed back into Edward's bedroom. He was still asleep on the bed. He was hugging my pillow, cuddling with it.

*He's so adorkable.*

I swiped some socks from my bag and slipped them on my feet. I rummaged through my bag and found my Nikes. I slipped them on my feet and I headed downstairs after I kissed Edward on the cheek. He mumbled that he loved me and burrowed deeper into the covers. I could hear some banging around in the kitchen, so I knew someone was up.



## La Cantante

When I got to the kitchen, I found Carlisle looking lost. "Is everything okay, Carlisle?"

He jumped a bit and gave me a crooked smirk. He looked almost like Edward, only thirty years older and blonde. "Yeah. I think. Esme asked me to get out all of these pans and casserole dishes for today and I'm having a hard time locating them. She ran to the store for some last minute items and as you can see, the kitchen is truly NOT my domain," he said pointing to a piece of paper. I looked at the paper and began rooting around in the cabinets and pulling the appropriate dishes and plates. I placed them onto the island of the kitchen and gave Carlisle a smile.

"No big deal. You're set. Have you had breakfast?" I asked.

"I had some oatmeal. It's homemade. Esme left some on the stove if you want some. I think she's making a bigger breakfast for when everyone else wakes up," Carlisle said as he sipped his coffee.

"Oatmeal sounds perfect."

Carlisle reached in the cabinet over his shoulder and handed me a bowl. He then went into the huge fridge and pulled out several bowls of fruit. I dished myself some oatmeal and sprinkled some apples and cinnamon on it. I poured myself a cup of coffee and sat down at the island, eating my breakfast.

"So, how's school going, Bella?" Carlisle asked.

"It's going well. For the most part. Both Edward and I are dealing with a psycho TA in our music theory class, but other than that, I'm happy."

"Edward mentioned something about this TA. He said that he lost some assignments and didn't record the grades in the grade book," Carlisle replied with a look of concern on his handsome face.

"That and some other things," I said with a grimace.

"What else happened?"

"James, the TA, was fired from the university. He didn't take it well. At all. He trashed his office. He trashed Dr. Meyers' office; he's our music theory/aural harmony professor and ruined his saxophone. Anyhow, on Sunday, James managed to get back into Brandon Hall and he confronted me in one of the rehearsal spaces. He said that I got him fired because I was flirting with him," I replied sadly. "He also said some other things that I'd prefer not to repeat. However, suffice it to say, it reopened some pretty volatile emotional wounds that I received from a previous relationship."

"I'm so sorry, Bella. Are you okay now?" Carlisle asked as he placed a hand over mine.

"Yeah. I'm actually going to work with the campus counseling center to try and work through some of my issues. The previous relationship left me with an acute case of anxiety disorder and depression. I got the depression under control, but when placed in a situation similar to what happened on Sunday, I get severe and emotional panic attacks. I had to use my anti-anxiety meds for the first time in nearly six months on Sunday."

"What are you on, if you don't mind me asking?" Carlisle asked.

"Ativan. It knocks me out and I hate taking it. I feel like I'm in a fog for days afterward. It calms me down a little too well," I said with a sad chuckle.

"Did you take a full dose?" Carlisle asked.

"Yeah. I needed to. I was very much out of control. Almost to the point of hurting myself or someone else," I said fiddling with my breakfast.

"Like I said before, I'm sorry. If there's anything that you need, don't hesitate to call me, Bella. You're part of the family now and I want to make sure that you're okay," he said with a compassionate smile.

## La Cantante

"Thanks. Now that you mention it, there is something I would like to ask," I said with a shy smile.

"What is it, Bella?"

"I'm due for my Depo-Provera shot soon. I'm on it for medical reasons. I have PCOS and I need the support with the hormones. I'd rather not go to the on-campus clinic," I began.

"Say no more. I'll pick up a dose from the pharmacy this weekend and I'll give it to you before you leave. How severe is your PCOS?"

"Not very. Just enough to screw up my cycle and make my periods extremely painful," I said as I rolled my eyes.

"Do you have to take any other medications for the PCOS?" Carlisle asked, clearly in doctor-mode.

"No. The birth control handles the symptoms. If it ever doesn't, I'll need to go on metformin, I think?" I replied, scrunching my nose.

"Right. Let's hope it doesn't come to that," Carlisle replied.

Carlisle finished his coffee and poured himself another cup. He then topped off my cup with a gentle smile. He turned his attention to the paper sitting on the island and we finished our breakfast in silence.

The silence was short-lived. Alice came bursting through the kitchen doors like a hurricane. She was rambling so fast about something. I only heard a handful words like 'Macys,' 'turkey,' 'parade,' and 'New York.' I was assuming that she was talking about the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. She was bouncing on her toes and looking at me expectantly. I was calmly eating my oatmeal and trying to ignore her.

"Bella! Did you hear me?" Alice asked impatiently.

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"I heard something. I wasn't sure if it was English," I said as I swallowed a bite of oatmeal.

"I asked if you wanted to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. It happens every Turkey Day in New York," she responded, more slowly.

"I know what the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade is, Alice. Jeez. I live in Seattle, not a hole in the ground," I grumbled. "Can I finish my breakfast first?"

"Fine. I'll be in the family room," she huffed and she scampered off.

"Is she always like this, Carlisle?" I asked with a giggle.

"Yes. All of the time. It's only gotten worse as she's gotten older," he chuckled.

"Esme says we're going to get a better place in heaven. I am going to have to agree. Alice definitely tries my patience, but I love her very much."

"I love her too. She's unique, that's for sure," I laughed.

"That she is."

I finished my breakfast and washed my bowl. I took my coffee and headed into the family. Alice was sitting in the center of the couch, trembling with anticipation. Her blue eyes were wide with excitement as she watched the parade on the flat screen television. I settled next to her and watched the parade. Rosalie joined us about fifteen minutes after started watching. About an hour after that, Esme came back from the store and we could hear her in the kitchen.

I got up and wandered into the kitchen. "Do you need some help, Esme?"

"Could you take out the stuffing from the pantry and other things for the stuffing out of the fridge?" she replied warmly.

I walked over to the pantry and grabbed the bags of bread stuffing and put them onto the island. I also pulled out the apples, celery, onions, and sausages

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out the fridge. I ran back to the pantry and grabbed the chicken stock for the stuffing as well. Esme took out a large fry pan and turned it on. She was unwrapping the sausages. "Esme, I'll do that," I said as I walked to the stove and finished unwrapping the little breakfast sausages. Esme walked to the family room and I heard her bark a few orders to Alice. Alice whined and groaned. Esme came back and took out a cutting board and a large knife. Alice skulked into the kitchen with the saddest expression on her face. She plopped down onto a stool and began cutting the celery for the stuffing. Rose came in after Alice and she sat down by Alice and started working on the onions.

Esme went into the fridge and pulled out the huge turkey. She removed the covering and placed it into the roasting pan after washing and preparing it. She stuck a few lemons in the body cavity. She also rubbed the entire body with butter, over and under the skin. She put some salt, pepper and a light coating of onion powder and garlic powder and put it into the preheated oven.

I had finished frying the sausages and the boys decided to come downstairs. I had placed the sausages into a bowl before I had to cut them. Emmett came into the kitchen and grabbed a handful of meat. I smacked him and made him put back most of it. I let him have one. I also let the other guys each have one sausage. Edward tried the puppy dog look to get another one. I quirked a brow and shook my head no. He pouted and stuck his tongue out at me, mumbling he should get special privileges.

*I don't think so, buddy. Just because you made me feel amazing last night does mean you get an extra sausage.*

After the sausages were cool enough, I handed them to Rose and Alice to cut up. I then began working on my broccoli casserole. I put the ingredients into a bowl and mixed them all together. I sprayed a casserole dish with some non-stick cooking spray and put the casserole into the dish.

Esme had begun boiling water for the potatoes. She had a pot for the sweet potatoes and a pot for the regular potatoes. I took a head of garlic and drizzled it with olive oil and put it in some aluminum foil. I put it in with turkey for twenty minutes to roast the garlic. Esme watched the potatoes until they were

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cooked. She called Carlisle when they were done to drain the water. Carlisle drained the sweet potato pot and Edward grabbed the regular potato pot. After he dumped the potatoes into the bowl I had set aside, I pulled him back his shirt. He looked at me like I was crazy. I handed him a potato masher, along with butter, milk and the roasted garlic. He sputtered and moaned and complained.

"The Jets are on, baby! I've got watch for my fantasy football league," he whined.

"That's why there's the internet, Edward. Use your muscles for good and not evil," I chuckled.

"Emmett gets to watch the game," he whined.

"Emmett is going to mash the sweet potatoes," I said, pushing him into a chair with his potatoes. "Love you, baby."

"Meanie," he grumbled and he started mashing the potatoes, begrudgingly.

When I walked back to the kitchen, Esme enveloped me into a tight hug. "You the absolute best, Bella. I've tried for YEARS to get Edward and Carlisle to help me on Thanksgiving. However, their asses were always glued to the couch watching football while I slaved in the kitchen with Alice. You've done what I couldn't do, ever. I love you!"

I brushed my finger nails on my shoulder and gave her a satisfied smirk, "All in a day's work." I checked on the turkey and the stuffing. Alice and Rose had put it into a casserole dish and we had placed it with the turkey when we took out the garlic. Esme smiled at me and grabbed my left hand, squeezing my fingers. As she squeezed, she felt my ring. Her eyes bugged out of her head and she held my hand up to face, looking at the sapphire ring on my finger.

"Edward Anthony Masen Cullen!" she bellowed.

"What did I do?" he asked.

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"Stop mashing and come here this instant," she squealed. Esme bounced on her toes and pulled me into another hug.

Edward walked up to his mom and me and quirked a brow. "What?"

"Do you have something to tell me, Edward?" she pressed, poking him in the stomach. She picked up my left hand and waved it in his face.

"Oh, crap. I forgot to mention that to you," Edward said, rubbing his hand on his neck.

"So, when's the wedding?" Esme squealed.

"It's not an engagement ring, Mom. It's a promise ring. I asked Bella earlier this week. It's a promise that I will propose and she will be my 'forever,'" Edward explained.

"Oh. That's just as exciting! I am so happy for both of you," she said, pulling both Edward and I into a tight, motherly hug. "The ring is gorgeous, Edward. Is it a sapphire?"

"Yeah. It's Bella's birthstone. It's also the month that we met," he said, caressing my cheek.

"Yay! Okay, Edward, back to your mashing. I love you, my sweet boy," Esme said, kissing him on the cheek and ruffling his hair. Edward huffed and went back to his potatoes. He had managed to get most of them on the table and not in the bowl. Esme gave me another hug and a kiss on the cheek and skipped back to the kitchen.

I walked into the family room and stood in front of Emmett, effectively blocking his view of the football game.

"Isabelly, move. You're blocking my view."

"That's the point, Emmett. Your turn," I giggled.

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"My turn, what?"

"Your turn to mash," I stated simply.

"Edward's already mashing. He's got it under control," Emmet replied, trying to move me.

"You're mashing the sweet potatoes, Em. Move it, buster," I said, holding my ground.

"But, the JETS! They're playing the SEAHAWKS! I gotta watch the game," he whined. I shook my head no and grabbed his ear. His face turned into a grimace and he got up to lessen the pain in his ear. I dragged him into the kitchen and put him next to Edward, who had mashed potatoes on his nose. I grabbed the sweet potatoes from Esme and gave Emmett his own bowl, butter and casserole dish. I stuck my finger into Edward's potatoes and was happy with the texture. The flavor was a bit off; the garlic was fine but there wasn't enough salt. I added some salt, pepper and a bit more butter. Esme went into the family room and dragged Carlisle and Jasper into setting the huge dining room table. Rosalie and Alice helped them. Esme and I worked together on the green bean casserole and the croissants. We put the green bean casserole into the convection oven and the croissants in the warming oven next to the stove.

"Bella, you need to be here for Thanksgiving from now on. This has been so smooth. Thank you so much," Esme gushed.

"It's not a problem. I enjoy cooking a lot," I said with a grin. I pulled the spiced peaches out of the fridge and put them into one of the serving bowls. I put the bowl on the table that was in the process of being set by Carlisle, Jasper, Alice and Rose. Alice was insistent that Carlisle and Jasper not touch the plates. This china set was going to be hers after she got married and she wanted it intact.

I walked back to the kitchen and looked around. Edward was putting his potatoes into the casserole dish I gave him. In addition to the potatoes on his nose, he now had some on his cheek and smeared on his shirt. Emmett was also a hot mess, too. He had potatoes in his hair and spattered all over the table.



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"You two are too much," I laughed. I held up my phone and snapped a picture.

"You didn't take a picture of that, did you Isabelly?" Emmett asked, panicked.

"I believe that I did. You both have more potatoes on your bodies than in the bowl," I chuckled. Esme walked up behind me and she began giggling. She was holding up a fancy camera and she snapped a few pictures, barely containing her laughter.

"That's our Christmas card," she snorted. I nodded.

I snickered and picked up the casserole dish that Edward was working on and covered it with aluminum foil, marking what it was. I placed it on the counter on the island. Emmett finished up, giving me the stink eye in the process, and I covered the sweet potatoes and did the same as I did to the mashed potatoes. "I'm going to change before we eat. I'll be back down in a little bit. Will you be okay, Esme?"

"I'm perfectly fine. I'll head up when you get down," she said with a warm smile.

I turned and headed to Edward's room. I felt his presence behind me and I quickly turned. He closed the door and his eyes were feral. He still had the potatoes on his nose. I looked at him and began laughing hysterically. He looked so sexy but I couldn't take him seriously with the food spread on his face. "What are you laughing at, Swan?"

I grabbed his hand and pulled him into the bathroom. I stopped him in front of the mirror and he looked at himself. "Fuck me. Is this what my mom and you were laughing at? And taking pictures of?" he asked as he washed his face. I was still laughing too hard to give him an answer. I just nodded.

Edward turned around and looked me in the eyes. I tried to calm myself down, but I just couldn't. Edward quirked a brow and he hefted me over his shoulder. "Edward! Put me down! I have to change and then go finish dinner!" I squealed.

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He tossed me onto his bed and straddled my waist. I tried to buck him off but he was too heavy. "Edward! Seriously! Get off me, chunk!"

"Chunk? Ooooh, you're going to pay for that, Swan," he said with an evil grin. He wiggled his fingers and began attacking my sides.

"Edward!" I screeched. I was laughing so hard, I was crying. I was wiggling and squirming trying to get away from his fingers. He wouldn't relent. He was laughing as he was attacking me. I reached my own hands up to try to reach his sides and couldn't do it. He pinned my hands with his own. We were nose to nose, breathing heavily.

"Chunk, huh? Are you calling me fat, Bella?" he said, smoothly.

"No. You're just heavier than me," I replied, looking into his playful eyes.

"Bella, a Chihuahua is heavier than you. You're like what 90 pounds?" he teased.

"Ah, no. Add about fifteen to that, Edward," I snorted. "You're like 300 pounds?"

"Shut it, Swan. More like 175, of pure muscle," he said with a smug expression.

"Well, get your 175-pound ass off my bladder or we're going to have some issues," I snorted. Edward narrowed his eyes and scrambled off my body. I darted to the bathroom and took care of my bladder problem. After I washed my hands, I walked back out into his bedroom and went to my bag. I pulled out the dress I brought for Thanksgiving. It was a deep purple sweater dress. I also brought my black leggings and my black boots to wear with it. I pulled off my shirt and I felt Edward's bare chest against my bare back. He ghosted his hands over my body, stopping at my breasts, circling them before pulling them out of the cups of my bra. "Edward, I don't have the time. As much as I want you, spud."

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His hands stopped their sensual assault on my nipples and breasts, "Spud?"

"Spud, slang for potato," I giggled. Edward's hands moved from my body and I felt his warmth move away.

"I'm never going to live that down, am I?" he asked.

"Nope, spudmuffin," I chortled. I adjusted my bra and pulled my dress over my body. I slipped off my pants and put on my leggings and boots on top. Edward was sitting forlornly on the bed, his face turned into a frown. "Chin up, Boise. We only tease the ones we love."

"Meanie," he said, narrowing his eyes.

"Edward, I'm joking. Seriously. You have to admit it was funny," I said, pulling his chin up to look me in the eyes.

"Yeah, it was. As are your puns. I love you, beautiful. I'm so thankful for you."

"I love you too, Edward. I'm eternally grateful for you and for everything you've done," I said, running my fingers through his thick, soft hair. I leaned down and gave him a sweet, loving kiss on his full lips. His arms circled my waist, pulling me to his body. I braced myself against his strong chest. His tongue traced my bottom lip before sucking it into his mouth. He reluctantly pulled away, giving me three soft kisses before releasing me. I kissed him one time on his nose and turned to leave his room. I walked downstairs and saw that Esme had taken out the turkey. She had moved it from the roasting pan and placed it on a huge cutting board on the island. The roasting pan was on the stove. All of the casseroles were in the oven for their final preparation. I also noticed that Esme had changed during my time upstairs with Edward.

The oven beeped and Esme asked me to put the green bean casserole on the dining room table. I also put the croissants into a bread basket and placed that on the table. Esme and I worked together to finish putting the meal on the table. Within a half hour of the turkey being removed from the oven, it was carved and placed into a serving platter, all the casseroles were on the table and

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everyone was seated in their places.

Carlisle sat at the head of the table, with Esme at his right. Edward sat at the other head of the table and I was to his left, next to Emmett. Rosalie was in between Esme and Emmett. Jasper and Alice were sitting opposite them on the table.

"Before we eat this wonderful meal in front of us, it's a family tradition to say what you're thankful for this year. I'll start. I'm thankful for my wonderful family, my beautiful wife, and their friends and loved ones. You've truly made this holiday special," Carlisle said as he raised his wine glass.

"I'm thankful, also for our wonderful family. Edward, you are so talented and bright. You make the world such a special place. I love you, my sweet boy. Alice, you are full of life and happy. Everyone who meets you walks away with a smile on their face. I love you, Pixie. I am also thankful for the newest members of our family, while not officially. Jasper, you are so laid back. Only you could tame our girl. Bella, you are truly a blessing. You've made my boy so happy. I love both of you. Emmett and Rosalie, I don't know you both yet, but I can tell that you are both honorable and loving. Thank you for being here," Esme said, sipping her wine.

"I'm thankful for our family and new friends. I'm also grateful for Jasper. I love you so much, baby. You make me so happy. I'm finally thankful for being healthy and happy," Alice chirped, drinking her water.

"I'm grateful for you, too, darlin. You've made incredibly happy as well. I'm definitely thankful for everything that has been bestowed upon me. I'm thankful for such wonderful friends and family. I love you all," Jasper drawled.

"Um, I'll go next," Emmett said uncomfortably. "I'm thankful for my Rosie. You're amazing, baby. So strong. I'm thankful for my Isabelly. You're also incredibly strong. I'm thankful for Edward who takes such good care of my sister. I love you like a brother, man. Okay, I'm done being sappy."

We all laughed as Emmett chugged his wine.

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"I'm grateful for my roommates. You both are so sweet and kind. You've made a rough beginning of the year go by very smoothly. You've also been very accepting of my issues. I'm thankful for Emmett who has been very patient with me. For the first time, I feel safe. I feel loved. I'm so grateful for that. Thank you, Emmett," Rose said with a smile

"I love you, Rosie. I think I have since I first laid eyes on you," Emmett said, with tears in his eyes.

"Oh, Emmett. I love you, too," Rosalie replied, a stray tear falling down her beautiful face. Emmett gently wiped the tear away with his thumb and kissed her sweetly. I could hear several other snuffles and Alice and Esme were also crying. Edward wiped my cheeks and I realized I was crying as well.

I took a deep breath and smiled. "I am incredibly thankful for having such wonderful roommates, friends and siblings. Rose, you've been so supportive of me this year, as we have similar stories. Alice, you are the sister I never had and I'm so grateful that I have you in my life. Even if you do drive me nuts when you attack me with your weird hair implements. Jasper, you have such a calming way about you. I'm grateful for your demeanor and your laid-back attitude. Carlisle and Esme, you two show each other so much love and respect. I'm in awe of both of you. I hope I can find what you have. Emmett, you're a big oaf with a minor flatulence problem, but I love you so much. You protect me, make me laugh and drive me crazy. I can't imagine not having a better brother. Finally, Edward, I'm so grateful for you. You have made me feel things that I never thought possible. You are funny, intelligent, handsome and incredibly talented. You have shown me what love truly is and what it can be. We've only known each other for a short while, but you are my soul mate, my love, my forever. I love you, baby," I said as I raised my glass.

Edward looked at me and he had tears in his emerald green eyes. He blinked a few times and he caressed my cheek. "I love you, too, *il mio cantante*. Save the best for last, right? I am so grateful and thankful for all of my friends, family and happiness in my life. Mom, Dad, I am grateful for both of you for giving me the love and support that I needed when I was younger. I am grateful for your encouragement to in my strive to do better. I am grateful for your support

of my love of music. I am grateful for your unending love and respect of each other. I never understood the depth of your feelings to each other until I met my 'forever.' Rose and Emmett, I am grateful for your friendship and your antics. Emmett, you have more than a minor issue with flatulence, but I love you too, like a brother. Soon, we will be. Rose, I'm thankful for the time you gave me in Toronto and your patience in my sad attempt to dance. Jasper, you are a saint to put up with my sister, but I love you, bro. Alice, you drive me crazy with your feelings and premonitions but you make life interesting. Finally, Bella, I'm thankful for the greatest gift that anyone could ever give me. You've healed the hole in my heart. The hole that was made when my mom died. You complete me, as cheesy as that sounds. You are my present, my future, my life, my 'forever.' I can safely say that we will have what Carlisle and Esme have ten years from now, fifty years from now, until we die. I love you with all of my heart, body and soul. Thank you."

I could feel the tears streaming down my face. I smiled at Edward. He also had some tear trailing down his handsome features. I lightly rubbed the tears away with my thumbs and leaned in to kiss him. Our lips brushed and my lips tingled. The feeling traveled all throughout my body, causing my heart to swell. We pulled away and linked hands under the table.

We began digging into our dinner. All of the food was delicious. The turkey was succulent and perfectly cooked. All of the casseroles and sides were delicious. I took a finger and dipped it in my potatoes and flicked it onto Edward's nose. He looked at me and did the same. "Careful, Boise. I don't want to ruin my dress," I giggled. He stuck out his tongue and wiped the potatoes off his face. All too soon, our plates were cleaned and we were sitting at the dining room table, stuffed and sated.

"I ate too much food," Emmett groaned. "It all was so good. My compliments to the chefs."

"Yes, this was absolutely delicious. Thank you, Esme and Bella," Carlisle said as he patted his full belly.

"Rose and I helped!" Alice griped.

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"You cut onions and celery, dear. That does not count as cooking," Esme chided. "Bella and I worked our butts off and therefore, we are NOT doing the dishes. I'm going to take my wine and enjoy the fire in the living room. Bella, come join me. I want to discuss some things with you regarding your apartment," Esme said as she held out a hand for me. I picked up my wine glass and followed her into the living room, where there was a fire blazing in the fireplace.

She sunk down onto the plush couch and curled her legs underneath her body. I sat and mirrored her posture. I sipped my wine and stared into the fire.

"So, Bella, I wanted to chat with you. About Edward. About the apartment. About anything that you want," Esme said with a warm smile.

"Okay," I said as I put my wine on the table.

"I'm so happy for both of you. I was secretly hoping your ring was an engagement ring, but I know it will come soon enough. However, I have to ask. Is Edward treating you alright? I want to make sure my son is being respectful and gentlemanly toward you."

"Oh my goodness, he treats me like a princess. If anything, he's too protective and attentive. However, I love that about him. He makes me feel like the only one in the world; the only person who matters. I'm so lucky, Esme. Edward is wonderful."

"Good. That means we raised him right. Well, Elizabeth gave him the foundation and we continued on the same path," Esme smiled.

"Can you tell me more about Elizabeth?" I asked.

"Well, Elizabeth and I were best friends. That's how I met Carlisle was through her. We were inseparable. We met in our sophomore year in high school in Chicago. Carlisle was a freshman in college. Anyhow, we were as close as sisters. When Carlisle and I started dating, I knew that eventually we would be. We both went to college together, as roommates. She went to school to be a

## La Cantante

musician and gave private lessons. Elizabeth was so beautiful. She looked almost exactly Edward. However, the female version of him. She was kind and loving and selfless. She was my maid of honor at our wedding and she also sang. She had such a beautiful voice. Like an angel. She met Edward Sr. at our wedding. He was a date of one of my cousins. They hit it off and they got married six months after us.

"About a year after they got married, Elizabeth discovered that she was pregnant. Edward was not a planned pregnancy. I was a little miffed at that. Carlisle and I were trying since we had gotten married but I could never carry a baby to term. I could get pregnant, but I was in a car accident that irreparably damaged my uterus. I was so jealous of my best friend, my husband's sister. However, when baby Edward was born, all those feelings dissipated. As soon as I held my nephew, I was in love. In love with the squirming, bronze haired, green eyed angel. Elizabeth and Edward Sr. named Carlisle and I as Edward's god parents. Edward's middle name, Anthony, was my father's name. At any rate, we were as close as any family could be. Elizabeth and Edward Sr. and little Edward were a constant fixture at our house until Carlisle moved out here to New York. He was offered a fellowship in oncology and we moved here. It pained us to be away from Edward and Elizabeth, but this a good move.

"Every couple of months, Elizabeth would send a video showing us something fantastic that Edward did on the piano or some new piece of music they composed together. When Edward was nine, Elizabeth got very sick. She was having some severe cramping and she thought that she was having a bad period. She went to the doctor and they discovered a huge tumor on her ovary. They removed it and it was diagnosed as stage IV ovarian cancer. They gave her only a few months to live. Carlisle and I moved back out to Chicago to be closer to Elizabeth and to help Edward Sr. care for little Edward. Carlisle also arranged to work in the hospital where Elizabeth was being treated. He even examined her results, as he was now a nationally recognized oncologist. He came up with the same findings. Carlisle was despondent. He couldn't use his brain or his connections to fix his sister.

"Just before Edward's birthday, Elizabeth passed away in her sleep. Little Edward was the one to find her. He went in to bring her breakfast and he



couldn't wake her up. I was in the house that day and I could barely calm him down. It broke my heart to see my nephew so lost and in pain. Edward Sr. fell apart as well. Elizabeth was his life. He was fiercely protective of her, similar to how Edward is protective of you. It killed him when the cancer finally claimed her life. He tried to keep it together for little Edward, but he couldn't. He began drinking heavily. We stayed in Chicago for a while. I would randomly check in on them and would find Edward Sr. passed out on the floor and Edward up in his room. There was a point in time where Edward had not eaten in nearly a week because he couldn't cook and there was no food in the house. I immediately brought Edward back with me and spoke with Carlisle, telling him what I saw. Carlisle was fuming. He went over to Edward Sr.'s home and tore into him. Edward Sr. said that he couldn't take care of his son. Just looking at him reminded him too much of his dead wife. Edward had gone to his lawyer that day and had papers drawn up, terminating his parental rights. He told him that he wanted Carlisle and I to raise him. Edward Sr. did set up a trust fund for Edward for his education. After Edward Sr. terminated his parental rights, we stayed in Chicago for another year and we adopted Alice close to the end of that year. Carlisle was called in as a consult to see if she had a rare form of bone cancer. She didn't. She was just small. We ended up taking both children back to our home here in New York to distance them from the horrendous memories they had in Chicago.

"Alice easily acclimated to her surroundings. Her bubbly personality and over zealousness made her easy to like. Edward had a difficult time. He was withdrawn and quiet. He spent his time playing his piano and crying when he wasn't in school. He really missed his mom. He resented his father for abandoning him. We eventually took him to a child psychologist and as a family we worked together. By the time Edward was in a freshman in high school, he was more like the happy, carefree boy that I remembered from when Elizabeth was alive. There was still sadness in his eyes, but he put on a good front. The only time the sadness disappeared was when he was performing his music, either on the piano, singing or playing the guitar. It was at those moments he felt connected to Elizabeth."

"Does Edward hear from his dad?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"Not very often. He'll send a card on his birthday. Edward usually just throws it away. He doesn't like celebrating his birthday because it was so close to Elizabeth's death. However, you need to know, Bella, that since you've come into his life, my Edward, the carefree, loving, happy boy is back. His eyes sparkle; there's no sadness. You have truly healed him. You've brought true happiness to my nephew, my son. Thank you so much. It means more to me, more to Carlisle than you can ever imagine."

"Esme, I haven't done anything. I just love him," I replied, tears threatening to fall down my cheeks.

"That's all he needs."

"Esme, do you still have those videos of Edward and his mom?" I asked.

"Yeah, I have them saved on my computer and on video tapes. Why?" she asked.

"I want to make Edward a DVD of all those memories for Christmas. I have some editing software on my computer and I know a company in Seattle that can put videotapes onto DVD."

"Oh, Bella. He'll love it. I'll send you the videos to your email that I can. I'll box up the cassettes and give them to you before you leave. You are such a blessing. Edward is truly lucky to have you."

"I'm lucky to have him. I've been wracking my brain with what to get him. Compiling all these memories into one spot will be perfect. I'll give it to him when he comes out to visit me after Christmas."

I knew I had to do this for Edward. Before me, his mother was his singer. Or rather, he was her singer. I needed to somehow commemorate her. This DVD project would be perfect. Esme hopped up and ran off. I'm assuming to begin boxing up the videos. I sat and brought my knees to my chest and smiled.

**A/N:**

**The Cullen's Thanksgiving Meal**

**Stuffing with apples and sausage**

**Broccoli Casserole (with mayonnaise and cream of mushroom soup. It's really good, trust me. PM me and I'll give you the recipe)**

**Sweet Potato Casserole**

**Garlic Mashed Potatoes**

**Green Bean Casserole**

**Turkey with gravy**

**Spiced Peaches**

**Croissants**

**Salad**

**Bella's Brownies**

**Pecan Pie**

**Pumpkin Pie**

**Apple Pie**

***NOW I'm hungry. This is what my family does for Thanksgiving. It's insane but oh, so good! PM me if you want any of the recipes. I'd love to share :)***

# Truth or Dare

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 41: Truth or Dare

### EPOV

After a delicious Thanksgiving dinner, Bella and Esme, who both did a majority of the cooking, went into the living room to put their feet up and relax. I was happy that they got along. Esme loved me like I was her own son and not just her nephew. I really wanted Esme to accept Bella and she has.

I helped clear the table with the rest of the group and we quickly had the dishes done and put away. Alice insisted on hand washing all of the dishes, obsessing over her china. I chuckled but went with it. I worked with Rosalie in putting all of the food away into Tupperware. We had enough food to feed an army. This was even with Emmett going back for multiple servings of each side, turkey and croissants.

*Where does he put it all? He's in great shape! If I ate like him, I'd be a moose!*

The dishes were put away, the food stored and the coffee was percolating. I decided to go in search of my Bella. I found her curled up on the couch in the living room. Esme had come into the kitchen as we were working on putting the food away, to make sure that everything was being done properly.

Bella had her arms wrapped around a throw pillow and she was sleeping. Her mahogany hair was spread over the arm rest of the couch and her mouth was slightly open. I sat down on the couch, in the crook of her body and tenderly caressed her cheek. I was so lucky to have such a wonderful woman in my life.

## La Cantante

She hummed sleepily and pressed into my hand. Bella's eyes fluttered and she looked up at me. She gave me an exhausted smile. "I must have dozed off. I'm sorry."

"Bella, you did a ton of work. You should go back to sleep, my beautiful girl," I said.

"Tempting. Really it is, but Alice is determined to get us womenfolk up at the ass crack of dawn to go to the sales on Black Friday. I won't be able to sleep if I take a nap now. I'd rather gouge my eyes out with a wooden stake then go out on Black Friday, but Alice will not take no for an answer," Bella grumbled as she sat up.

I rolled my eyes at my pixie sister. Once she had her mind set on something, it would take an act of God to prevent her from doing it. "Bella, this is ridiculous. If you don't want to go, you shouldn't have to. Do you want me to talk to her?" I asked.

"Would you mind, Edward? You just know my *love* of shopping," she snarked.

"It's about as high your list as it is mine," I chuckled. "Shopping for you though is a different matter."

"Oh, please, Edward. I don't need anything. You gave me this gorgeous ring. I don't need any Christmas presents or any other presents, for that matter," Bella said, looking at her hand. She smiled wistfully and lightly fingered the gems in her ring.

"Bella, I'd give you the world if I could. There is nothing that I wouldn't want to give you," I said simply.

"You spoil me," she chuckled.

"I intend to. For the rest of our lives," I replied, leaning down to kiss her perfect lips. "You are the best kisser, Bella. I love kissing you," I mumbled against her mouth.

## La Cantante

"I love kissing you, too, Edward. Your lips are so soft," she said as she traced my lips with her fingertips. It caused a shockwave to travel through my body and I smiled. "Alice?"

"Alice. Got it. Consider it done," I replied, hopping off the couch and going to the kitchen.

"...That's why we need to go early. So we can get the best sales prices and save oodles of money," I overheard Alice say.

"Mary Alice Brandon Cullen, you are seriously the shopping fairy," I laughed.

"I know. It's a gift. Can you tell Bella that we're leaving here at 4:30 tomorrow morning?" Alice responded with a wide grin.

"Ah, no. Bella's not going," I said, quirking a brow.

"What? Why?" Alice said, disappointed. "She *has* to come! She needs to get you your Christmas present!"

"Alice, not everyone has your affinity for shopping. If Bella doesn't want to go, you shouldn't force her."

Alice narrowed her eyes and stomped into the living room. I dashed after her to insure that the shopping fairy didn't spread her fairy dust.

"Bella! You have come with us tomorrow! It'll be so much fun! Please," Alice whined.

"Alice, I would rather not. Eating live cockroaches are higher my list of things to do than going shopping on Black Friday. Besides, I have to work on several homework assignments," Bella retorted.

"Homework assignments? Are you kidding me? Bella, please!" Alice begged.

## La Cantante

"No. I'm sorry. I'll go with you any other time, but I refuse to go out on a Black Friday," Bella said with a tone of finality.

"Ugh, fine. However, we're going to go shopping before the end of next week. You *NEED* to get Edward his present and I know exactly what you're getting him," Alice chimed.

"I already am working on Edward's present, Alice. I've got this," Bella said with a smile.

"Baby, you don't need to get me anything," I said with a crooked smirk.

"Okay, pot meet kettle," she giggled.

"Fair enough, Swan."

"Do you know how you can make it up to me, Bella?" Alice said, with a puppy dog pout.

"Seriously, Alice?" she griped.

"Yes, seriously. We can play truth or dare tonight," Alice said with a wicked grin.

"Alice, are we like twelve?" I laughed.

"No, but it's fun. We can do stuff that we never would have thought of when we were twelve, Edward."

Bella and I shared a look. She quirked a brow and shrugged her shoulders.

"Okay, Alice. We'll play your game after the parents have gone to sleep," I caved.

"Yay!" Alice squealed. She bounced on her toes and gave me a kiss on the cheek. She then gave Bella a hug, knocking her back onto the couch. Alice scampered into the kitchen and she announced to the rest of the group of her

plans.

"I apologize ahead of time for Alice's antics and shenanigans. I would also like to remind you, we are not related by blood and hopefully her enthusiasm is not passed down to our children," I told Bella solemnly.

"Edward, she's fine. At least I got out of going shopping, thank the Lord! I fucking hate shopping," Bella snorted.

I sat down next to Bella and she laid her head in my lap. I ran my fingers through her soft, curly hair and watched the fire dance in the fireplace. My mind drifted and I hadn't realized that the rest of the family had also settled into the living room. Bella had fallen back asleep and was snoring slightly. My parents sat down in an oversized chair, with Esme's legs over Carlisle's. He was lightly scratching her back. Rose and Emmett sat on the loveseat that was opposite the main couch. Rose had her fingers laced with Emmett's and her head was resting on his shoulder. Jasper and Alice were on the floor in front of the fireplace; Jasper's head in Alice's lap and she was massaging his scalp. Everyone was so relaxed and happy. Eventually, most everyone drifted off into dreamland. I stayed awake and reflected over the scene in front of me. As I looked around the room, I could only feel one thing: home.

xx LC xx

After our siesta, we all got some dessert. Bella's brownies were gone in a matter of minutes. Emmett had four of them and would have had a fifth, if there was any left. Bella promised that she would make some over Christmas break. Emmett squealed like Alice and began doing a ridiculous happy dance that made him look quite funny. He was shaking his ass and flapping his arms like a chicken.

*They're brownies, Emmett.*

However, as soon as I put a brownie in my mouth, I knew why Emmett was dancing the funky chicken. They were the best brownies ever baked. They were better than sex. Okay, well, no. Especially sex with Bella, but they were



## La Cantante

pretty damn good. I'd have to make sure that Bella made these quite often when we move in together.

*I'll definitely be a moose if I eat these delicious brownies everyday for the rest of my life. Must. Go. To. The. Gym!*

We played a mad game of charades when we finished dessert. I was paired with Alice and we kicked everyone's ass. It was like I could read her mind and Alice could see what I was going to do. It was really freaky. Fun, though. Bella and Emmett came in a close second as they used their sibling bond to move ahead. We decided that the next time we played siblings and significant others could not be paired up. That should even the playing field.

Carlisle and Esme headed upstairs after our charade battle and the rest of us headed to the basement to play our game of truth or dare.

*Why, Alice? Why? Fuck. My. Life.*

We all settled into the huge sectional in the basement after we got some drinks. We all had something alcoholic. There was no way I'm playing this game sober. Too many inhibitions. I'm reserved as it is. I need some liquid courage, especially with Alice asking the questions. Before I got too comfortable, I also got a bottle of Jaegermeister for some more liquid courage, dag nabbit.

"Okay, Mary Alice. We're here. What are you going to do with us?" I asked as I took a long pull from my beer.

"Well, Edward Anthony, we're all going to do a shot. Thank you for getting the Jaeger. It saves me a trip to the bar," Alice said as she filled up each shot glass. She handed them to everyone. "On the count of three. One. Two. Three!"

We all pounded our shots and I heard Bella sputter and cough. "That is the grossest tasting stuff I've ever had!" she croaked.

"Obviously, you've never swallowed," Emmett guffawed.

## La Cantante

Bella turned a bright pink and gave Emmett the death stare. He looked at her and gave her a dimply grin, batting his eyelashes. "You are disgusting, Em. Really gross."

"Okay, enough sibling teasing banter," Alice chirped. "We all know how to play, right? I certainly hope so. I'll go first."

"Oh, no! Alice, you went first for your twenty questions game. Let someone else go," Rose sniped.

"I'll go first," Bella responded, rolling her eyes. "Jasper, truth or dare."

"I'll start easy. Truth," Jasper drawled.

"Okay. How many girls have you kissed?" Bella began.

"I want to say twelve? I think," Jasper said, scratching his head. "One guy, too."

Emmett and I, our eyes bugged out of our heads at his confession.

"It was a dare in high school. I was in *Godspell*. I was John the Baptist. I was dared at the cast party to kiss the guy who played Jesus. We did. I think he enjoyed it too much," Jasper laughed. "Okay, I'm next. Edward, truth or dare."

"Truth, please, Whitlock," I answered, pouring myself a shot and downing it.

"How long is your dick?" Jasper said with a wicked grin.

"Seriously? Are *you* gay?" I teased.

"Nah. Just curious. So, spill it, Cullen," Jasper chortled.

"It's not like I've taken out a ruler and measured my cock. Christ. My estimate is would be from the heel of my palm to the tip of my middle finger would be length when, um, aroused," I muttered.

## La Cantante

"Damn, Cullen! You're hung!" Emmett boomed. "You're such a skinny dude, I would have never thought!"

"I am not skinny, Emmett. In body or in cock, thank you very much," I said, quickly clapping my hand over my mouth. "I can't believe I just said that!"

"So, Edward's long and wide. Bella, you are one lucky bitch," Rosalie bellowed.

"Damn right, I am!" Bella replied, giving me a kiss.

"Um. Okay, my turn. Rose, truth or dare," I asked.

"I'll be bold. Dare."

"Okay, Bella had her 'lesbian' moment with my sister. Your turn," I said with a sardonic grin.

"Got it. Come here, pixie and pucker your lips," Rose giggled. Alice and Rose both got up and walked to each other. They gave each other a shy smile. Rose took Alice's face in her hands and she pressed her lips to Alice's. They held their kiss for a moment and broke apart.

"Was that good for you, Edward? Or do you want some tongue?" Rose asked, quirking a brow.

"Perfect," I said.

"Okay, who shall I pick on?" Rose asked wickedly. "Emmett! Truth or dare."

"Dare, baby," Emmett said with a wide grin.

"We already know that Jasper is gay and he might enjoy this, so... Make out with Edward. Tongues, everything," Rose said, shooting me a glance.

*Fucking-a. NO!*

## La Cantante

Emmett got up and curled his finger to me, beckoning me to him. Bella was in hysterics. I was in shock. I did NOT want to do this. This is my girlfriend's BROTHER!

I got up slowly and moved to Emmett. He was slightly taller and tried to romance me, caressing my face and shit. "Come on, Eddie. Just pretend I'm Bella. With stubble."

"That's not helping, Emmett. I think I threw up in my mouth a little bit," I said, scrunching my face. "I need a shot before I have Emmett's tongue down my throat." Alice poured me a shot and handed me my glass. I chugged it and looked back at Emmett. "Let's do this."

Emmett wagged his brows and cupped my face with his paws. He leaned down and his lips ran against mine. I tensed up and tried to pretend it was Bella, but couldn't. Then he shoved his tongue through my lips and I shoved away from him. I couldn't handle it.

"Okay, Rose. I was nice to you. What the fuck?" I said, wiping my mouth.

"Payback from Toronto and the deviant behavior in the bathroom," she giggled.

"I think I need to drink bleach," I shuddered. "Bella, hold me."

She opened her arms and I laid my head on her chest, burrowing into her body, trying to forget what just happened. She kissed my forehead and I could feel her laughter. I looked up at her and growled, snarling my lip. She brushed a wayward hair out of my eyes and pressed another kiss to my head. I leaned up to kiss her lips and she pulled away.

"Oh, no, Eddie," she teased. "You just kissed *Emmett*. I don't know where his mouth has been. You must shower before your lips touch mine."

"I hate you, Rose," I grumbled.

"No, you don't. You hate Emmett," she snickered.

## La Cantante

"My turn!" Emmett boomed.

"Inside voice, Emmett. It's late," I said, rolling my eyes.

"Sorry. Isabelly! Truth or dare."

"Truth, Emmett," Bella responded.

"I probably don't want to know this, but most public place you've had sex," Emmett asked.

Bella blushed and ducked her head behind mine. I looked into her eyes and they were darkened with desire, reliving our moments. "At the homecoming dance, out by the boathouse was the MOST public. However, after our performance at Eclipse, Edward and I went at it in the green room."

"Holy shit! Damn girl, I never you had it in you," Alice gushed. "You either, Edward. You're so straight laced and proper. Almost Victorian."

"Don't forget..." I began. Bella slapped her hand over my mouth and pleaded with her eyes not to mention our tryst on the piano.

"Don't forget, what? Edward, what will Bella not let you say?" Emmett said, raising his brows.

"Piano," I got out before Bella covered my mouth again.

"Piano?" they all asked. I nodded emphatically. As much as it was wrong, it was so fucking hot.

I pulled Bella's hands away and she huffed. She indicated for me to go on but I couldn't betray her confidence. I kissed her nose. She swatted me away but I gave her a crooked smile. "That's all you're gonna get."

They all groaned and begged for Bella to tell them. She abjectly refused and loudly said, "ALICE! Truth or dare?"

"Dare."

"Okay. Give Jasper a sexy lap dance to this song for at least two minutes," she said, reaching for my pocket. She pulled out my phone and set it up on the sound dock in the basement. She pressed play and the tune "LoveGame" by Lady Gaga was pumped into the basement. Alice grabbed Jasper's hand and put him on an ottoman in the center of the room. Alice began gyrating her hips to the beat. She was playing Jasper's hair and swaying her body. She eventually straddled his legs and began swiveling her hips over Jasper's body. His cornflower blue eyes were as big as saucers as she moved above him. Bella was not paying attention to them but watching the timer on my phone. When two minutes came around, she paused the song and the lap dance was abruptly ended.

"Hey!" Jasper yelled. "I was enjoying that!"

"Yeah, a little too much, Jas," Bella snickered, glancing down at his crotch. Jasper's cheeks burned red and he ducked behind Alice who was giggling.

"Okay, Edward! Truth or Dare, brother dear," Alice said with a wide smile.

"Truth, Mary Alice."

"Stop calling me that, Edward Anthony. Piano?"

"Fuck," I grumbled.

"If you don't tell the truth, then you have to sit naked for the next two rounds," Alice chided.

"What? No way! You can't change the rules like that, Alice," I whined.

"Edward, just tell them," Bella said quietly, her cheeks were flushed pink.

"I'm sorry, baby," I responded, kissing her cheek.

## La Cantante

"Do the crime, gotta pay the time, in the form of Truth or Dare with Alice," Bella said with a shrug.

"Piano. Shit. After our concert at Brandon last Saturday, Bella and I had sex on the Steinway on stage," I replied in one breath. My cheeks were more likely bright red and Bella was hiding behind my shoulder. I reached behind me and gently rubbed her arms. "I'm so sorry, Bella."

"Don't apologize, Edward. I had fun. That was an erotic moment," Bella said into my shoulder. "I don't regret it. Please don't think that I did."

"The STEINWAY? Holy crap! ON STAGE?" Alice squealed.

"Yes, Alice," I said rolling my eyes. "The Steinway on stage. It was fucking hot. I loved every minute of it and can't wait to do it again. How about you, Bella?"

"I'm up for anything," Bella chuckled.

"Good to know," I said, kissing her temple. She turned her head and tenderly kissed my lips. "Emmett, truth or dare?"

"Truth, Edward."

"What's one thing you regret that you did in the past?" I asked.

"I have two, actually. The first one is smoking pot my freshman year of college. That was hellacious. The second one is more personal. I wish I was there for you, Isabelly, last year when you were attacked by Jacob. I'm so sorry," Emmett said quietly. "I wish I was there for you in the whole situation."

"Em, it wasn't your fault. It's also not your job to protect me. I appreciate your apology and I accept it, but it's unnecessary," Bella said graciously.

"I love you, Isabelly."

## La Cantante

"I love you, too, Emmy," she said giving him a hug. "Your turn."

"Right, my turn. Jasper, truth or dare?"

"Dare," Jasper said with a grin.

"This requires some assistance. Alice, do you have waxing supplies?" Emmett inquired with a wicked grin.

"Yeah, why?"

"Wax Jasper's pubes," Emmett guffawed.

"What? No way! Nuh uh! I'd rather sit around the next two rounds naked," Jasper said with a look of horror.

"It's your choice, Jas," Emmett said with a shrug.

Jasper began taking off his clothes. Bella handed him a throw blanket and he covered his lap. He wiggled out of his pants, underwear and shirt. Emmett handed Jasper a pillow and he stuffed it under the blanket and the pillow was unceremoniously ripped from his lap. The pillow was conveniently covering his junk.

*Must wash that pillow before the end of the weekend.*

"Okay, Rosalie. Truth or dare?" Jasper said calmly from his seat.

"Um, truth, Jasper," Rosalie giggled.

"Taking Emmett out of the equation, who would you rate the remaining people in the circle, using the 'bang, date, marry' scale. Girls included," Jasper asked.

"Okay, I'll start with you, Jasper. I'd want to date you. That's it. Sorry," she replied as she bit her lip.



## La Cantante

"No big deal, Rose. It's called truth or dare. Not make everyone happy and dare," Jasper laughed.

"Bella, I'd want to bang you and then marry you. You are fucking hot. If I was a lesbian, I'd do you," Rosalie replied. "You're also fiercely loyal and so sweet.

"Edward, I'd bang and date you. I want to bang you for your supercock. However, I see how you treat Bella and it would be nice to have that. Emmett, you do an awesome job, but talk to Edward. He is the KING of spoiling his woman," Rose laughed.

"Got it, Rosie. Ed, we're talking later," Emmett said, winking.

"Alice, I'd want to just bang you. You're too hyper to handle long term," Rose chortled.

"I know. No biggie," Alice chirped.

Bella was leaning against me. She was getting heavy and her eyes were at half mast. "Tired, love?" Bella nodded and cuddled against my chest. "Hey guys, we're going to head to bed," I said with a yawn.

"You're no fun," Alice grumbled.

"Okay, Mary Alice. I made out with Emmett and shared some secrets that if they EVER leave this room, I'll be royally pissed. I'm tired and so is Bella. We're. Going. To. Bed. See you tomorrow," I said getting up from the couch.

"Good night, you guys. See you tomorrow morning," Rose said with a smile.

"Let me give you both a hug," Jasper said, attempting to get up.

"That's okay, Jas. Stay seated," Bella said quickly.

"Got it, Bells."

## La Cantante

Bella and I linked hands and climbed both sets of stairs. Bella walked to the bathroom and I heard her putter in there. I'm assuming she was taking off her makeup and taking out her contacts. She came back out with her hair pulled into a messy bun and her glasses on her beautiful face. She walked to her bag and pulled out a pair of pajamas and she slipped off dress. She pulled on her tank top and then wiggled out of her leggings. Her pajama bottoms were put on and she crawled into bed. I stripped off my khakis and dress shirt and slipped between the covers. Bella rolled over and nestled herself onto my chest.

"I love you, Edward. Thank you for having me for Thanksgiving. I had a lot of fun," Bella mumbled sleepily.

"I love you so much, Bella. I can't imagine not having you here for Thanksgiving. I wish I could have you here for Christmas, but I'm grateful to have you in my life, beautiful," I said into her soft, fragrant hair.

"Sleeping is not going to be difficult tonight," she chuckled.

"Tell me about it. I'm feeling the tryptophan. Go to sleep, my Bella," I said, gently raising her chin. I kissed her nose and then tenderly kissed her lips.

"Good night, my Edward. I'm so happy that you're mine."

"Always, Bella. I'll always be yours. As I hope you'll always be mine."

"Forever. You are my forever."

*She is my life, my present, my future, my forever. She is my home.*

**A/N: So, a fluffy chapter. Needed to have some fun. Up next: Decorating the Cullen home for Christmas, citrusy goodness, returning to Emerson and some drama with Jacob...**

# Christmas Elves

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*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 42: Christmas Elves

### BPOV

I vaguely remember going to bed last night. I was so exhausted from all of the cooking and preparation for Thanksgiving. The only thing I do remember was curling up against Edward's bare chest and thinking that I was home. I never felt more loved, safe and happy than anywhere else. I loved my parents and brother. However, my feelings for Edward transcended them exponentially.

When I finally woke up, I was alone in Edward's huge king-sized bed. I looked at the clock and saw that it was after eleven.

*I guess I was more tired than I originally thought. I like to sleep late, but this is a first.*

I heard a light knock on the door and I indicated for them to come in. Edward walked in, wearing a pair of jeans and red plaid button down, with a tray of food. He gracefully walked across the room and placed the tray over my legs. "Morning, beautiful. You were asleep like the dead. You barely moved when Esme knocked to ask me and the other guys to begin bringing up the Christmas decorations," Edward said, his green eyes sparkling.

"I was totally drained. I love to cook but yesterday was the biggest meal I ever worked on. I think I could have slept for another three, four hours," I replied. "Thank you for breakfast. This looks really good."

## La Cantante

On my tray was French toast with strawberries and whipped cream. There was also a small cup of fruit, some breakfast sausage, coffee and small vase with a single red rose. I moved up the bed and picked up the fork. I dug into my breakfast and moaned.

"Good, huh?" Edward asked expectantly.

"This is the best French toast I've ever had," I sighed, cutting myself another piece.

"It's the one meal I can cook. I'm glad you like it," Edward replied, settling himself on his bed.

"You made this? Edward, I will have you cooking gourmet meals if this is your 'one' meal you can cook well. You definitely know your stuff."

Edward's cheeks blushed and he rolled his eyes. He swiped a piece of fruit from my tray and popped it into his mouth. He leaned back on his elbow and lay on his side. "What do you feel like doing today, beautiful?"

"I thought you and the rest of guys are turning into Christmas elves and transforming this place into a Holiday Palace," I giggled. "All you need is a pair of ears that are pointy."

"Funny, Swan. We are in the process of fixing up this place. I managed to step away to make your breakfast. Carlisle gave me twenty minutes to cook you breakfast and *deliver* it. I told him that I would need more time because I want to sit with my beautiful girlfriend while she eats my one feast that I can prepare. You really want me to wear Vulcan ears?"

"You know Star Trek? I think I fell deeper in love with you than I already thought possible," I swooned.

"Yes, I know Star Trek. My mom and I used to watch *The Next Generation* and *Deep Space Nine*. The other two spin offs were crap," Edward chuckled.

## La Cantante

"Out of the two, which did you like better?" I asked, sipping my coffee.

"If you had asked me when my mom was alive, I would have said TNG. However, I've come to appreciate the 'darkness' of DS9. That and Dax was hot," Edward laughed.

"I liked Dr. Bashir. I have a thing for tall guys with strong jaw lines and green eyes," I giggled. "New Dax or old Dax?"

"Both," Edward responded, his eyes twinkling. "If only their eyes were brown, they would have been the perfect woman. Like you, beautiful."

"Oh, please, Edward," I said, chucking a grape at his head. "I'm far from perfect."

Edward caught the grape in his mouth and snorted. "You're perfect to me and that's all that matters."

"Back to your question, I'll probably help you and the other elves in the decorating mayhem. Did Esme go shopping with Alice and Rose?"

"No, she stayed back. She wanted to supervise her minions," Edward chortled. "Why?"

"I just have a few questions for her. No big deal," I said as I finished my breakfast. "Thank you again for a delicious breakfast, Edward."

"It was my pleasure, my Bella," Edward said as he picked up my tray. I hopped up off the bed and gathered my clothes to shower.

Edward placed the tray on the corner of his dresser. "Want help?" Edward asked with a lascivious grin on his face.

"I kind of remembered hearing the shower running this morning," I teased.

## La Cantante

"I worked up a sweat moving those boxes of Christmas finery," he replied in his velvety voice. He began unbuttoning his shirt. I whimpered and I felt my knees get weak.

"EDWARD! We need you!" Emmett bellowed.

"Fuck me," Edward muttered, his head dropping to his chest. He quickly buttoned his shirt. "Later, promise me?"

"Promise, handsome. Go be elf-like," I giggled as I kissed his cheek.

Edward shook his head and did a little skip out of the room before he rolled his eyes. "Emmett is such a cockblocker. Damn it."

Edward breezed out of the room and shut door behind him. I gathered my clothes and slipped into the bathroom for a quick shower.

xx LC xx

After my shower, I pulled on a pair of dark jeans and a green sweater. I slipped on a pair of ballet flats and my glasses and padded downstairs. I walked to the kitchen to get something to drink. I heard the boys cursing in the living room over yet another strand of lights being out. I found Esme on her computer and she was jotting down some things on a pad of paper.

"Hello, Esme. How are you doing?" I asked as I sat down on one of the stools near the island.

"I don't know about you, but I'm exhausted. All that cooking knocked me out," she laughed.

"Yeah. Edward told me that I slept like the dead. I could have slept longer, but I don't want to be too much of a bum. I did have a question for you," I asked.

"What is it, Bella?" Esme responded kindly.

## La Cantante

"You know my project that I'm working on for Edward?" Esme nodded and gave me a huge smile. "Can you send the videos to my home in Seattle? I don't want Edward to know what I'm working on."

"That's a brilliant idea! I'll box them up and send them this week," Esme gushed as she gave me a hug.

"I'll call my dad so he can expect the box of videos," I responded, returning Esme's hug. "What are you working on?" I asked.

"Oh, Edward showed me some pictures of your apartment and I was working on some sketches for the décor. Here, take a look," Esme responded, pushing her laptop toward me. The sketches were beautiful. The colors were light and airy, but very neutral. The family room was done in beige, sky blue and chocolate brown. The kitchen was in a darker blue, but in the same color palette as the blue in the family room, with golden accents. The master bedroom was a bit more 'sultry.' It was the same golden color that was in Edward's bedroom with burgundy accents.

"Esme! This is absolutely beautiful," I breathed as I clicked through the sketches she created.

"Thank you, Bella. I was hoping you would like it. Perhaps tomorrow, we can go shopping for some furniture for your new place," Esme said with a motherly smile.

"This is really too much. You don't need to do this," I sputtered.

"It's my pleasure, Bella. I want a beautiful home for you and Edward. This our Christmas gift for you and Edward. I insist," she pressed.

"She won't take no for an answer," Carlisle said as he strolled into the kitchen. He went to the refrigerator and pulled out a couple bottles of water. "By the way, if you want your shot, I can give it to you today."

## La Cantante

"Can we do it now? I hate needles and the sooner I don't have the prospect of that over my head, the happier I'll be," I said with a shy grin.

"Sure. Let me give the boys their water and we'll do it in my office," Carlisle said as he lollopped to living room. A moment later, Carlisle beckoned to me and I followed him up the stairs to his office. It was a large room filled with books. Near the back of the room, by the window, was a large wood desk with flourishes on the clawed feet. There were two large leather wingback chairs facing the desk. Along one of the walls was a leather sofa that was covered with a ton of paperwork. There were also papers on the floor, on top of the Oriental rug. "The papers are research on prostate and testicular cancer. We're doing a clinical trial at the hospital and I was looking over some numbers. I'm sorry about the mess. Esme would have a fit if she knew that I was bringing you up here and the room looked like this."

"It's no big deal, Carlisle. It looks homey," I said with a grin.

Carlisle readied the shot and took out an alcohol wipe. I pushed down my shoulder of my sweater and exposed my bicep. Carlisle wiped down the spot he was going to inject the needle. I turned away and took a few deep breaths. "Ready, Bella?" I nodded and I felt a slight pinch and warmth travel under my skin. "We're all good. Let me know if you feel any side effects."

"I will. Thanks, Carlisle," I said as I readjusted my sweater. I scampered out of the office and headed downstairs to check on the Christmas elves. I found them in the living room. Jasper was sitting on the floor, trying to untangle the twinkle lights. Emmett was working with Edward in putting together the tree. The foyer had already been decked out with lights and garland. There was also a small Dickens' village set up on the top of piano.

"Who put these lights away? They are so fucked up," Jasper grumbled.

"That would be Alice. She doesn't like to roll them. She balls them up and throws them into a box," Edward said.



## La Cantante

"Remind me to kick her ass when she gets home," Jasper said with a grimace.  
"This is ridiculous."

"Hey guys! The foyer looks awesome," I said as I plopped down next to Jasper. I picked up a ball of lights and began untangling.

"Thanks, Isabelly. It was all my mad decorating skills," Emmett said as he puffed his chest.

"Sure, Em. And I'm a natural blonde," I teased.

"You'd look good as a blonde, Bella," Jasper said with a grin.

"No, she wouldn't. Our mom tried blonde once and she looked like a corpse. Bella has Renee's coloring. I'm pretty certain Edward would not want to date a corpse," Emmett barked.

"No. I wouldn't. I like my girlfriends to be living and breathing. Zombies and vampires just don't do it for me," Edward laughed.

"Well, you did date a succubus," Jasper laughed.

"Who was the succubus?" I asked.

"Tanya," Jasper and Emmett replied together.

"I fucked up! I know I did. You don't need to keep bringing it up! Jeez! Bella, you know I love only you, right?" Edward said, with a pleading look in his eyes.

"Yes, Edward. I know you love only me. However, Tanya is nasty," I replied, scrunching my nose.

"Yes, she was. This is why I dumped her and moved up," Edward said as he hopped off the ladder he was standing on. He leaned down and kissed me.  
"Definitely moved up. You are worth a million Tanyas. If not more."

## La Cantante

"Thank you, Edward. While we're all here, perhaps we should discuss Kellan's proposition at Eclipse," I said.

"Good idea, Isabelly. I think we should do it," Emmett replied as he finished adjusting the tree. "What do you all think?"

"I'm flexible. It would be nice to have a regular gig that pays," Jasper said as he put his lights on the table. "My concern is the time commitment. We would have to step up our rehearsals in order to keep our show fresh."

"That's my concern, too," Edward chimed in. "I'm willing, but my studies come first. While this is important, it's not our lives. It's not going to be our livelihood."

"If we schedule our rehearsals on Sunday evenings, it should be fine," I suggested. "We could also 'jam' so we don't have to pull out all of the equipment for our rehearsals."

"So, yay or nay?" Jasper pressed.

"I say hell yes!" Emmett boomed.

"I say yes, if it doesn't interfere with our studies," Edward said.

"I agree with Edward. If it becomes too much, then we need to pull out," I said, rubbing his knees.

"Edward, call Kellan. Let him know our decision," Jasper said with a smirk.

Edward looked at me and gave me a squeeze. He pulled out his phone and the business card out of his wallet. He dialed Kellan's number and waited for him to pick up. Edward switched on the speaker phone and placed it on his knee.

"Kellan Moore."

## La Cantante

"Hello, Kellan. This is Edward Cullen from the band Breaking Midnight," Edward began nervously.

"Ah, yes! Have you guys discussed my proposal?" Kellan asked excitedly.

"Yeah. We just finished discussing it as a group. We're interested in your offer," Edward said, biting his fingernail on his thumb. "However, we'd like to see a contract before we commit to anything."

"Of course. I'll draft something up and send it to you in the form of a PDF file. Can I get an email address?" Kellan inquired.

Edward gave Kellan his email address and he also included my email address. "If there are any changes, we can meet and discuss them next week?" Kellan suggested.

"That works for us," Edward responded as we nodded. "We'll call if anything changes. Thanks, Kellan."

"No, thank you. I look forward to working with such a talented bunch of musicians. We'll talk soon. Have a great weekend," Kellan replied and he ended the call.

Edward ended the call on his end and put his phone on the table. "I guess all we have to do is wait for the contract and see if it's doable. I'll have my parents' lawyer look it over when I get it."

"Awesome! We're going to be a house band," Emmett boomed. He got up and did a dance, nearly knocking over the Christmas tree. We all laughed and went back to decorating the Cullen Castle. By late afternoon, all of the decorations that Esme wanted up were in their appropriate spots. Rosalie and Alice had returned with a ton of bags from their sales shopping on Black Friday. We all ate leftovers from Thanksgiving for dinner and decided to go to a movie. We all watched the movie that Emmett and Rosalie picked out and then headed back to Edward and Alice's home. When we got back, we all scattered and went to our respective rooms. I was still tired and as soon as I lay down on

## La Cantante

Edward's comfy bed, I was out like a light. I vaguely remembered Edward changing me into pajamas before curling up next to me. I mumbled that I love him and he sleepily said the same.

xx LC xx

I woke up early the next morning. Edward was still curled around me, asleep. I took a moment to stare at his features.

*It's not polite to stare when they're conscious. When they're in dreamland, it's ALL good.*

His hair was a hot mess, sticking up every which way. I ran my fingers through his silken tresses, enjoying the feeling against my fingers. As I moved my hand through his hair, he hummed and pulled me closer to him. My leg was sandwiched between his. I could feel his arousal against my belly. I chuckled lightly and continued my visual perusal of my handsome boyfriend.

I continued running my fingers through Edward's hair as I looked at his face. His jaw was so strong and so angular. You could cut glass with the edges of his jaw. I moved my hands from his hair and traced his jaw line. I could feel the rough stubble that was scattered there. I moved my hands to his nose and ghosted my fingers there. His eyes fluttered and I could tell that he was close to waking up. My fingers ran along his high cheekbones and my other hand moved to his chest, where I ran my fingers through his smattering of chest hair.

"What are you doing, beautiful?" Edward mumbled sleepily, his voice deep from lack of use.

"Ogling," I giggled.

"I must be quite a site if you're ogling first thing in the morning," Edward replied, cracking open his jade eyes and giving me a groggy smile. "Did my hair fall out in the middle of the night and you're staring in shock?"

## La Cantante

"Uh, no. Your hair is still all there, handsome. I'm just ogling the hotness that is you," I said, cuddling into the crook of his neck.

"Hotness? Please. I'm far from hot, Bella," he admonished.

"Sure, okay. And I'm Angelina Jolie," I deadpanned. "Edward, you are the hottest guy I know. I'm still in shock that you want to be with me. I'm a plain jane compared to you."

Edward growled and pushed me onto my back. He pinned me with his lean body and arched a brow as he stared into my face. "Bella, you absolutely gorgeous. However, it's not your looks that attract me to you. It's your heart, your brain, your compassion. It's the whole package. You have a beautiful face and an awesome body. I've never met someone as loving, compassionate, or selfless as you since my mom."

"Thank you, Edward," I replied as I gently caressed his cheeks.

"Also, do you feel this?" he asked as he wiggled between my legs, his erection pressing to my pajama-covered core. "I'm in a constant state of arousal being around you. Only you do this to me, beautiful. I only want you to do this to me."

"So, you have your, um, problem? What are you going to do about it?" I challenged.

"Whatever you want me to do, baby. What do you want?" he purred as he leaned down and began kissing my neck.

*I cannot form coherent thoughts when he does that. Fuck.*

"Umm," I mumbled unintelligently. I ran my fingernails up and down his back. He pressed his erection closer to my core. "Oh, my God."

"I mean it, Bella. What do you want? I'll do anything for you," he said in between kisses.

## La Cantante

"I want you, Edward. Only you," I murmured, gently pushing a hair out of his eyes. Edward's face moved to a crooked smirk and he crushed his lips against mine. His tongue entered my mouth and it languidly danced with mine. Edward's hand moved to my leg and hitched it over his hip. My fingers wound through Edward's thick hair, pulling him closer to me.

"Bella," Edward moaned. "God, I love you so much, beautiful."

"I love you too, Edward," I responded against his lips. Edward sat back on knees and pulled me up with him. He took off my tank top and he stared at me for a moment. I instinctively began to cover myself.

"Don't, Bella. You're gorgeous. Don't cover yourself," Edward said lovingly. I leaned back on my elbows and let Edward do his share of ogling.

I sat up and gently pulled Edward down to kiss me. I hooked my thumbs in his boxers and pushed them down his legs. I moved my hands to Edward's firm ass and gave it a gentle squeeze. Edward pulled away from my kiss and quirked a brow. "You have a great ass, Edward. Perfect apple bottom."

"Apple bottom?" he laughed.

I gently cupped his ass cheeks, "Apple bottom," I replied and pulled him back to my lips. He eagerly returned my kiss and wiggled his ass. With his hands, he pulled down my pajama bottoms and underwear. His fingers ghosted up my legs and reached my heated core. He moved his lips from my mouth to my neck and he plunged two fingers into my pussy. I groaned in pleasure and swiveled my hips. With his thumb, he flicked my clit and my hips swiveled at his touch. "Edward, I need you. Please."

"Your wish is my command," he purred. Edward removed his fingers and he lined up with my entrance. "I love you, Bella," he whispered as he entered me. I always felt so complete when I was with Edward. He was mine as I was his. I pushed on his shoulder and rolled us so I could be on top. I straddled Edward's hips and began moving up and down on his cock. "Fuck, baby, that feels so good."

## La Cantante

Edward's hands moved to my breasts and he gently palmed them. With his finger tips, he rolled the nipples and I threw my head back. I leaned back against Edward's legs and shifted my hips. I was grinding against him and his cock was hitting my g-spot. One of his hands moved down to my clit and he circled it with his expert touch. I could feel my body grow tense with pleasure. I was close. The expression on Edward's face indicated he was close too. Our eyes met and he flipped us so I was underneath him. He pulled my legs so they were on his shoulders and he drove into me, going so deep into me. I moaned and squirmed under him. "Edward," I cried. "Harder."

He complied and I could feel his body slap against mine. He was grunting and his face was contorted. "I'm so close, baby. Come with me, please," he moaned. "I love you, Bella. You are my life, my everything."

At his words, my pussy clenched around him and I let out a scream. It was quickly muffled by Edward's mouth covering mine with a heated kiss. I felt him come inside my body, his warmth spreading through my veins. Edward continued to kiss me until we both came back down to Earth. I removed my legs from his shoulders and he hesitantly pulled out, a frown gracing his handsome face. "If I could be inside of you forever, I would, beautiful. I feel so complete with you," Edward said reverently, pulling me to his chest.

"I feel the same way. I feel like I'm 'home.' I never want to be away from you, Edward. I never thought I could feel something like this, ever. I love you so much," I said as I pressed a kiss above his heart. Edward held me close and we fell back asleep for a few hours in our post coital bliss.

xx LC xx

Saturday was pretty low key. Emmett and I called our parents and chatted them up a bit. I told Charlie about the package that I was expecting. He said that he would sign for it and put it in my room. I worked on several papers as did Edward. We also took turns doing our laundry. After our laundry day, Carlisle and Esme took us all out for dinner at a posh grill in town. It was a lot of fun. Carlisle shared stories of Alice and Edward as children. Even though Edward was reeling from the death of his mother and loss of his father, he was fiercely

protective of little Alice. Alice was in turn very compassionate toward Edward as a child. She cared for him like a mother, even though she was younger than him. Emmett and I shared stories of our childhood. Emmett shared tales of my clumsiness and multiple trips to the emergency room. I was too embarrassed to share any stories about Emmett. We headed back to the homestead after eating dessert. Carlisle and Esme headed up to their room and we watched a couple of movies in the family room. We all headed up to bed after the movies and settled into bed.

We all woke up late on Sunday and Esme cooked us brunch. After brunch, we packed up our belongings to head back to Emerson. None of us wanted to, but we had to finish up the semester. We only had a few weeks left before Christmas break. We left for Emerson in the early afternoon. Alice and Jasper leading our little caravan back to the university. I was working on my laptop as Edward followed his sister. I was putting finishing touches on my psychology paper and working on my presentation for the class. Edward was humming with music coming through his speakers and lightly tapping on the steering wheel. I looked over at him and smiled. He was wearing a baseball cap and sunglasses. He looked incredibly hot as he nodded his head to the beat of the song.

"I love you, baby," I said unexpectedly.

"I love you, too, beautiful. What was that for?" he chortled.

"Just because," I said wistfully. I turned back to my laptop and continued typing. Edward tenderly ran his knuckles across my cheek. I leaned into his touch and smiled. I held his hand and kissed his palm. He hummed and reluctantly pulled his hand away. We drove in a comfortable silence as we sped back to Emerson. Before I knew it, we pulled into the parking lot of Patterson. I packed up my laptop and scrambled out of the car. I slipped my laptop bag over my shoulders and grabbed my duffel bag. Edward slipped his bags over his shoulders and picked up our laundry baskets, balancing them in his hands. I pulled his lanyard from his hand and locked his car and headed into the dorm. I swiped my key card and held open the door for my muscle man. We walked up the stairs to my room and I went to unlock the door.



## La Cantante

However, the door was open. I frowned and pushed the door open.

*Holy shit.*

**A/N: Sorry. Cliffhanger. All will be resolved next chapter. Please review :)**

# Moving Day

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 43: Moving Day

### BPOV

*I swiped my key card and held open the door for my muscle man. We walked up the stairs to my room and I went to unlock the door.*

*However, the door was open. I frowned and pushed the door open.*

*Holy shit.*

### EPOV

Bella and I looked around her dorm room. The room was completely trashed. The beds were flipped and the desk drawers were pulled open. Pictures that were on their desks were broken and strewn across the room. The lion I had given Bella was ripped and torn to shreds on her bed. Bella's guitar was smashed and was in the middle of dorm room. Bella had put down her bags and started to move into the room. I tossed down the laundry baskets and stopped her.

"Bella, we need to alert campus security and the police. We don't know who did this," I said, my voice tight with fear. Bella squeaked and nodded. She turned and dashed out of the room to find Angela. I pulled out my phone and dialed campus security. They said that they would send over an officer in a few minutes. I also called Detective Raisor and Detective Lutz. They were not working today, so I was patched to their voicemail. I also sent a text to their

cell phones, saying it was an emergency.

Bella returned with Angela and showed her what had happened to her room. Her eyes widened and she shook her head. "The dorms were locked up over break. No one should have gotten in unless they were buzzed in by a student staying on campus."

Alice, Rose, Emmett and Jasper had come up by the time Bella had showed Angela what had happened. Rose shrank into Emmett's arms and Alice was fuming. She was more concerned about her closet and clothing than actual implication of what had happened in their dorm room. Bella found me and latched her arms around my waist. Her face was wet with tears and she was whimpering. I could feel her tremble against me and I wanted to take her away from this. I held her tightly and pressed a kiss to her forehead. Bella sniffled against my chest and tried to get closer to me.

I heard a shuffle in the hallway and looked up. Detective Raisor and Detective Lutz were in the hallway, talking to the campus security guys. Behind them were a couple of crime scene technicians. Detective Raisor walked up to Bella and I and touched Bella's shoulder. She recoiled and held onto my waist tighter. "Bella, it's Detective Raisor. It's okay, sweetheart," she said softly.

Bella looked at the detective and hesitantly pulled away from me. She still held my hand and we were led downstairs into a waiting squad car. I looked behind us and saw the rest of our group being led into other squad cars. We were driven to the police station and led into the conference room. We sat down at the table and Bella settled into my lap. She needed this and I would gladly give it to her. I gently rubbed her back and waited for the rest of the group to come into the room, along with the two detectives.

We all were settled in the conference room and Bella asked quietly, "How did you know?"

"We were alerted by campus security that there was a break-in in your dorm over the Thanksgiving weekend. We couldn't investigate because the tenants were not there. However, I had a suspicion that it was your room. When we got

## La Cantante

the text from Edward, we headed right over," Detective Raisor said with a sympathetic smile.

"Do you think it's Jacob?" Bella questioned quietly.

"There were some reports of a tall, Native American man snooping around campus. There was a girl who said that she saw a guy staring at Patterson and she gave us a description. We had her work with a sketch artist and this is what they come up with," Detective Lutz said as he pulled a sketch out a folder.

Bella nervously peered at the drawing and she hopped out of my lap and curled up in the corner of the room. "That's Jacob. That's him. I'll never forget his face," she whimpered.

I got up and sat down in front of Bella. She looked at me with fear in her eyes. They were quickly becoming glazed over and I knew I had to calm her down. I held out my hands and she looked at them. She put one of tiny hands into mine and crawled back into my lap. I shifted my body so I was leaning against the wall and tried to calm her down. Her heart was racing and her breathing was shallow. I looked up at Emmett and he was searching through her purse for her meds. He found a small bottle and tossed it to me. I shook out one of her pills and held it in my hand. She eyed me warily and took the pill.

"How did he get into her room?" I asked.

"When we came to investigate the break in, someone mentioned a pizza delivery guy showing up and dialing a random room. He was buzzed in but the pizza never came. We assume that was Jacob. However, after that, he was not seen on campus since," Detective Raisor replied sadly.

"What's going to happen now?" Bella asked.

"We have some crime scene technicians going over your room with a fine-toothed comb. However, until they are done, your room is a crime scene and off limits. You'll have to find another place to stay. We can give you a name of a few motels that are nearby to campus," Detective Lutz replied.

## La Cantante

"Emmett, can you come here?" I asked. Bella looked up at me and her face was panicked.

"Where are you going? You're not leaving, are you?" she simpered.

"No, beautiful. I'm calling Alistair. We're moving into our apartment as soon as possible. We need the extra security," I said as I kissed her forehead. She nodded and got off my lap. She ran into Emmett's arms and he held her tightly. I walked out of the conference room and I pulled out my phone and dialed Alistair.

"Dorwood Hills Apartments, Alistair speaking," Alistair barked into the phone.

"Alistair, it's Edward Cullen. I came in two weeks ago with my girlfriend and signed a lease for apartment 418. Is there any way that we could move in immediately?"

"Mr. Cullen, this is unexpected. Let me check with the apartment management company, but I don't see why not. Give me about a half hour and I'll call you back," Alistair sputtered.

"Thank you, Alistair." I hung up the phone and walked back into the conference room. Detective Raisor and Detective Lutz were filling out paperwork to provide Bella and me with a restraining order against Jacob. While I was on the phone with Alistair, the crime scene technicians had called and said that there was a fingerprint on the smashed guitar. It was a positive match to Jacob Black. He had been in her room. Bella sobbed against Emmett and he looked at me in a panic. I was willing my phone to ring with good news from Alistair. We needed to get into the apartment now.

My phone began ringing in my hand and I nearly dropped it. I fumbled and answered, "Hello?"

"Mr. Cullen?" Alistair asked.

"Yes. Please tell me that you have good news for me," I replied desperately.

## La Cantante

"The apartment has been vacant for some time and so if you want to move in immediately, that would be fine. However, your lease will be from now until January 31st, 2012. We will prorate your rent for this month and just add it to your rent to December," Alistair explained.

"That's fine. We'll be there in a few hours. I just want to make sure, there's electricity, water and heat, correct?" I clarified.

"Yes, sir. I'll be here until 6:30, so if you want to get in today, you need to be at the office before then."

"Thank you so much, Alistair," I replied, appreciatively. I stepped out of the conference room as I hung up with him and called my parents. I needed some furniture and needed it quickly. I spoke with my mom and she said that she would get everything settled. We would have furniture by the middle of this week. She had already ordered it from her suppliers and they were waiting for the move-in date. She also said that she would come to receive the delivery of the furniture.

I slipped back into the conference room and the detectives were finishing up their reports. They handed me a copy of the restraining order and asked me to sign it. I scrawled my name and folded up the paper and placed it in my wallet. Bella had done the same and it was in her purse. We all headed out of the conference room and were ushered back into the squad cars. We were driven back to Patterson where I ran up to Bella's room and grabbed our laundry baskets and bags. I threw them into my car and drove us to our apartment. The rest of the group followed us in Alice's car. I buzzed the door and Alistair let Bella and I into the leasing office. We signed for our keys and he led us up to our new apartment. He unlocked the door and handed the keys to Bella. He gave us a sad smile and congratulated us. I followed him out into the hall.

"Alistair, there is something that you need to know," I said solemnly.

"I'm assuming it's not good by the fact that you needed into the apartment immediately," Alistair said with a grimace.

## La Cantante

"No, it's not. My girlfriend is being stalked by her ex-boyfriend. We both have a restraining order out against him. The reason we needed in immediately was he trashed her dorm room at Emerson. We need the extra security. If this guy," I said as I pulled out the sketch of Jacob from the police station, "comes anywhere near here, you need to let me know or call the cops."

"Got it. If there's anything that you need, let me know. I'm in apartment 126," Alistair said with a firm shake of the hand.

"Thanks, man. I appreciate it. Also, my mom will be here on Wednesday with a huge order of furniture. Is there a freight elevator that we can use?"

"Yeah, just have the delivery guys pull up to the back entrance," Alistair said with a smile. He sauntered to the end of the hall and waited for the elevator. I unlocked the door and strode back into the apartment. I should be excited. Living on my own, with the love of my life. However, I was scared out of my mind. I needed Bella to feel safe. I needed to feel safe. Hopefully being here would provide that.

I found everyone sitting in the living room on the floor. Bella had her head in Rosalie's lap. She was sleeping fitfully. I gestured to Alice to come into the kitchen. She hopped up and gave Bella a kiss on the cheek. "What's up, Edward?"

"Can you and Jasper go to the store get some basic necessities for us? I don't want to leave her," I began.

"Say no more, Big Brother. You got it. I'll pick up whatever you need," Alice said as she wrapped her tiny arms around my waist. "She'll be okay. You'll be okay. Nice place, by the way."

"Oh, you and Rose are staying here until they get the room figured out. We're not going to have you stay in that room, especially after Jacob has been in there," I said, cupping Alice's face.

## La Cantante

"We'll talk to the housing office on Monday. We'll be back. Emmett, Jasper! Let's go!" Alice commanded.

"I can't leave my Isabelly," Emmett said quietly.

"We need your truck and your muscles. This is for your Isabelly," Alice demanded. I handed Alice my keys and she scampered off with Jasper and Emmett. They went back to Patterson to pick up Emmett's truck. With my car and Emmett's truck, that should surely be enough room for everything they needed to get. Alice gave me her keys so we wouldn't be stranded without a car.

I walked into the living room and sat down on the carpet, next to Rosalie who was lightly running her fingers through Bella's hair. She was crying for Bella. Rose looked up at me and gave me a sad smile. I squeezed her shoulder and returned her smile. "Jacob is an asshole," Rose muttered quietly.

"Yes. He is. He's also a coward. He waits until she's gone to trash your room. That's bullshit," I seethed.

"He's playing these cruel mind games with her. It's not right. She's going to break at some point, Edward. We have to stop it. I just don't know how," she mumbled sadly.

"Me neither, Rose. I can't stop him. I feel so helpless," I replied as I pulled my knees to my chest, resting my head on top of them.

"Edward, you're doing the right thing. You're getting her out of the situation. Also, thank you for opening your new home for Alice and I until this all gets settled down," Rose said as she scratched my back.

"Alice is my sister and you're like a sister to Bella and me. It's the least I could do. I'm certain that Bella would appreciate the company. I know I am," I responded. I closed my eyes and tried to get my brain to calm down. I couldn't.



## La Cantante

I hopped up and got a notebook and began scribbling everything I needed to do tomorrow. I was overwhelmed with all that needed to be completed. I had to move up the phone and cable installation. I needed to contact the housing office and inform them of my move, as did Bella. I also needed to update my mail information. I leaned against the counter in the kitchen and held my head in my hands. I didn't even realize that I was crying until I saw the ink on the paper begin to bleed. I needed to pull it together. I ran my hands hastily across my cheeks and went into the bathroom. I splashed some cold water on my face to get rid of the splotchy look on my face. I took a few deep breaths and headed back into the living room and relieved Rosalie from being a pillow. She smiled and scampered to the bathroom. She grumbled about no toilet paper and she texted Alice asking her to get some.

After about an hour and a half of hanging out in a quiet apartment, Alice, Emmett and Jasper had returned. They had picked up a slew of supplies along with cleaning out my closet and everything in my dorm room. Emmett, Jasper and I started lugging everything up from the cars. Bella had woken up and worked with Alice in putting everything away in the closets and cabinets. She was in autopilot mode. Her face was a blank mask. I could tell that she was struggling, but we needed to get this done. After we lugged up all the supplies, I slapped on my sticker for my car and pulled my car into the garage, in our assigned spot. I headed up to our apartment and worked with Emmett and Jasper to assemble the three air mattresses that they had purchased. They got two twin sized and one queen sized. We blew them up and put them into the master bedroom and guest room. Alice and Bella had put some towels in the master bathroom along with the other bathroom necessities.

We finished setting up the apartment with the supplies that they bought. I called and ordered some Chinese food and had it delivered. When the delivery guy buzzed up, Bella tensed up. I rang him in and Emmett and I opened the door to pick up the food. The small Asian guy shrank back when he saw us and thrust the food into my hands. I gave him the money and he nearly ran off. We spread out a blanket and had a picnic of Chinese food on the living room floor. Bella picked at her food as did I. The only person that actually ate the food was Emmett.

## La Cantante

After our half-hearted dinner, Rosalie and Alice went back to Patterson with Emmett and Jasper to get their bags to spend the next few days with Bella and me. Once they left, I finally had an opportunity to talk to my beautiful girl. "Are you okay? Bella, I'm really worried about you," I said sadly.

"I'm freaking out, Edward. How did he know where I lived? Seth was the one who sent the packages. Jacob never knew my school address," she said, rubbing her face.

"I don't know, Bella. I'm freaking out, too. I'm tired of him fucking with our lives. Our moving in together should have been a happy occasion. Not a result of some asshat who trashes your dorm room," I grumbled.

"I wish he would just go away and never come back," she seethed. "I hate him. I hate what he's doing. I hate him with every fiber of my being."

"Join the club. I'm definitely not on 'Team Jacob,'" I fumed.

"I hope he gets caught and is arrested and we can go on living our lives," Bella replied, crawling into my lap.

"I want that too. I also want furniture. My ass hurts," I joked.

"Sorry, baby. I faintly remember you saying something about Wednesday?" she said, kissing my jaw.

"Yeah. However, I think I may need to get some folding chairs because the floor is NOT comfortable," I grumbled. The intercom buzzed and I scrambled off the floor to see who it was. Alice, Rose, Jasper and Emmett had returned and I rang them in. Alice and Rose had their bags. They dumped them in the guest bedroom. Emmett and Jasper carried sleeping bags and pillows.

"Bella, the technicians were done with our room. However, they haven't cleared it for us to get our stuff yet. When they do, we'll clear out your things and bring them over," Alice said with a hug. "I know that you don't want to go in there. The housing office is also finding us a different placement for when

we head back to the dorms."

Bella nodded and returned Alice's hug. She also pulled in Rosalie and held them closely. I wrapped my arms around all of them, as did Jasper and Emmett. We are safe in our little bubble, for now. However, this needed to end. It needed to end soon.

xx LC xx

Bella and I didn't really sleep last night. Neither one of us could get comfortable on the air mattress. When my alarm on my phone went off at 6:15, Bella groaned. I wanted to toss my phone across the room. However, that would not have been good. I got up and stretched out my body. I had kinks and pains in my back and shoulders. I moved slowly to the bathroom and took care of my business. I got dressed in a pair of jeans, hiking boots and a hoodie. I know I looked like a bum, but I couldn't honestly care less. This fucktard was messing up my life and I couldn't do anything about it. I was more concerned for my Bella.

Bella was searching through her bags for something to wear and cursing under her breath. I went into the kitchen and fumbled with the coffee maker that Alice had purchased. I made a pot of coffee and grabbed two travel mugs that Alice had also gotten. I wandered back into the bedroom and handed Bella her mug of coffee and she gave me a sad smile. She took a sip of her coffee and hummed lightly. "Thank you, Edward. I'm so sorry that you got roped into this."

"I'm not. I love you and I want to be there to protect you, baby."

"I don't want to go to class," Bella grumbled.

"If it's any consolation, neither do I," I teased.

I heard the rest of the group get up from the guest bedroom. Emmett moved like he went twenty rounds with a professional boxer. He was not happy. Jasper looked like he stuck his finger into an electric socket. He grumbled

## La Cantante

something about needing a hat. I went and grabbed a hat from the closet and tossed it to him. He pulled it over his golden hair and leaned against the wall. We all traveled down to our cars and headed to campus.

I parked the car on the street near Brandon and mentally added a commuter sticker to my list of things I needed to address today. Bella and I walked up the stairs to our classroom and settled into our usual seats. I barely even paid attention to class. Jotting down notes that were on the board. I noticed that Bella was doing the same. When class was over, we headed to the housing office to inform them of our change in housing accommodations. Rose and Alice were already there and we went back into the office. We explained what had happened. I told them that I had acquired an apartment off campus and would not be living on campus any longer, as would Bella. The person in the office apologized profusely and called in their boss. We told their boss the story and he issued a check to Bella for the remainder of her housing costs. He also worked with Alice and Rose to get them a new rooming assignment. He found a placement in Rathburn that was a double. He told them that they could move in anytime they want.

After our meeting in the housing office, Bella had to go to her education class. I begrudgingly went to biochemistry and sat through an uninteresting lecture. As I was sitting in my class, my phone buzzed from my pocket. I pulled it out and saw that I got a new message from Esme.

*I pulled some strings and the furniture is going to be delivered today. I'm on my way. Can you meet me at your apartment? - Mom*

*I'm in class now. Will be there in about a half hour. Thanks. I love you, Mom. - Edward*

*I know you do, my sweet boy - Mom*

I smiled and thanked my lucky stars that I didn't have to sleep on the floor tonight. My back was killing me and I was cranky. Before I left biochemistry, I sent out a text to Bella and Alice explaining that I was meeting Esme at the apartment. I asked Alice to give Bella a ride back to the apartment after

## La Cantante

University Singers. She said she'd be more than happy to. I jogged to my car and headed back to the apartment. As I waited for my mom, I made the necessary calls to get our phone number set up and for the cable to be brought in. I also got high speed internet with the cable. They said that they would be able to come tomorrow in the afternoon. Bella would have to sign for all of the cable and internet connections. My mom buzzed up to the apartment and I rang her in. Both her and Carlisle came up. Esme wrapped her arms around me and I just fell apart. I had been so strong for Bella that having my mom comfort me, I let it all go. She held me and lovingly rubbed my back as I let my emotions go. I gathered myself and pulled away, rubbing my cheeks dry.

"Are you okay, Edward?" Carlisle asked.

"I will be. I'm sorry for losing it there," I mumbled.

"Edward, you are incredibly strong. Don't be upset. I'm proud of you, my sweet boy. You've got a good head on your shoulders to arrange moving in so quickly," Esme said as she patted my cheek. I nodded and gave her a smile.

"You want to see the place?" I offered. Esme and Carlisle nodded and I gave them the tour. Esme was very excited at the place. She said the furniture that she ordered would work really well here. As I gave them the tour, her phone rang and it was the delivery truck. Carlisle and I went downstairs to show them where to go. The delivery guys began unloading their truck and bringing the furniture to our apartment. Esme told them where to put each piece. By the time Alice had dropped off Bella, the apartment was completely furnished and Esme was working on small details.

"Holy crow! This is absolutely fabulous," Bella breathed when she walked into the apartment. "Esme, I can't thank you enough."

Esme held open her arms and Bella ran into them, hugging her. I heard Bella begin to cry. Esme moved them to the leather couches in the family room and let Bella fall apart in her arms. She rocked and held her, providing her with the comfort that she needed. I sat down next to them and gently rubbed Bella's back. Esme pulled back and tenderly wiped Bella's tears from her cheeks.

## La Cantante

"Come on. Let's go shopping. I know that Alice picked up some things, but we need to stock your kitchen, bathroom and get some bedding for your bedroom and the guest room. It'll be fun. The guys can finish setting up the sound system and doing the grunt work," Esme said with a wink. Bella giggled and turned to look at me. She hugged me and got up to head to the store with Esme.

Carlisle and I set up the flat screen above the fireplace with the speakers sitting on the mantle. We also set up another smaller flat screen in our bedroom in the entertainment center. After that, I set up the desk top computer that I had my dorm room in the guest room on the huge desk that was put in there. Carlisle and I worked for a few hours until Rose and Alice had returned. We sat down in the family room and relaxed until Bella and Esme returned from the store.

About an hour later, Bella and Esme had returned with a ton of things for our new place. Bella had cashed her housing check and insisted on paying for some of the things. Unbeknownst to Bella, Esme placed cash into her purse for equivalent of what she bought. Esme didn't feel right with her spending her money like that. She wanted to spoil her soon-to-be daughter-in-law.

Esme and Bella had fully stocked the kitchen with all the pots, pans, plates, bowls, silverware and serving necessities. Esme handed me several bags full of towels and bedding for our master suite. I grabbed Alice and we made up my bed with the new duvet cover and pillows. I then placed the towels into the bathroom, putting the extra ones in the linen closet. There was another set of towels for the guest bathroom and I put them in there. Rosalie had made the bed in the guest bedroom and placed the air mattresses into the closet in that room.

Carlisle, Emmett and Jasper ran out while we were setting up the apartment with Esme to pick up some dinner. They went to a local greasy spoon and got some unhealthy food. We all sat down at the new dining room table and dug into our roast beef sandwiches and cheese fries. It was so unhealthy, but tasted so good. Esme and Carlisle had arranged to stay at a local hotel tonight to help Bella with the cable and phone guys coming tomorrow. She was not comfortable with being alone in the new apartment and I didn't honestly blame her. I was actually going to ask Emmett or Jasper to stay with her, but that was

unnecessary now.

After dinner, Emmett and Jasper headed back to Patterson. Rose and Alice stayed here at the apartment until they could move out tomorrow. Rose and Alice decided to sleep on the huge couches in the family room. Bella took a shower and crawled into our bed and lay down. I did the same, as I didn't shower this morning and I was feeling quite ripe. I felt better as soon as I stepped into the hot stream of water. It worked on my sore, tired muscles. I leaned against the tiles of the bathroom and breathed deeply. We had done it. We moved in and things were going to be okay.

I wrapped a towel around my waist and padded into the bedroom. Bella was reading her history book with her iPod in her ears. I slipped on a pair of boxers and crawled into bed with my girl. "How are you doing, beautiful?" I asked.

She pulled out an ear bud and gave me a tired smile. "Better. I only had to take my anti-anxiety meds once today."

"When was that?" I asked.

"I was walking from psychology to University Singers and I saw a tall guy with a ponytail who physically looked like Jacob, but it wasn't him," she murmured. "I was a little freaked out so I took a pill."

"I'm sorry, baby. I wish I was there to help you," I said, caressing her face.

"You are here to help me. We're sitting in our apartment because you had the foresight to get us in before our lease began. Thank you, Edward," she said, running her fingers through my wet hair.

"I'd do anything for you, beautiful. Anything," I said truthfully, pulling her hand from my hair and kissing her palm. "I only wish it was under better circumstances."

"Me too. However, we're living together," Bella said with a bit of enthusiasm.

## La Cantante

"We're living together. Thank God!" I said as I flopped back onto the comfortable bed. "We have a bed, not an air mattress."

"We have furniture and towels," Bella giggled.

"We have a *bed* and a door and time to ourselves," I purred.

"However, you also have a girlfriend who is dealing with Aunt Flo. So no go, buddy," she said kissing my nose.

"Damn it. As soon as you're done, we're christening this place," I said huskily.

"I'll settle for cuddling with my awesome boyfriend in our wonderful new bed," she said with a grin.

"Seems like a fair compromise," I replied. Bella tossed her history book onto the floor and cuddled against my chest. She pressed a kiss to my chest, above my heart. "I love you, beautiful."

"I love you too, Edward. Thank you for everything. I don't deserve you," she said quietly.

"Bella, please. You deserve me. I want to make sure that you are safe and happy. I don't deserve you, beautiful. However, I'll do everything in my power to make you safe and protected and loved," I said into her soft hair.

"You already do that, handsome," she muttered sleepily.

"You're tired. I'm tired. Let's go to sleep," I said quietly. Bella nodded against my chest and I turned off the side lamp. I cupped Bella's chin and brushed my lips against hers. She hummed and traced her tongue along my lips. She pulled away and nestled against my chest, pressing another kiss above my heart. Her breathing evened out and I knew she was asleep. My eyelids grew heavy and I eventually drifted off to sleep.

xx LC xx



## La Cantante

*" She's mine, you fucker. She'll always be mine," I heard in the darkness.*

*" No, she's not," I seethed. I frantically searched the darkness for his voice. I needed to end him. I needed to make Bella's pain go away. A bright light flashed in my eyes. I covered my eyes and tried to adjust to the sudden change.*

*" Yes, she is," he growled. I blinked and saw her sitting in a chair, eyes panicked. "She is my love. Not yours. She's only using you. She'll come crawling back to me."*

*Bella screamed and a pair of dark hands covered her mouth and lifted her from the chair. Jacob came out from the shadows and he towered over her. He was standing behind her and his hands moved from her mouth and went to grab her breasts. She squirmed and tried to get out his grasp. I shot toward him and found myself restrained by four hands. I jerked and attempted to move from their vice-like grips. I felt a stabbing pain in my side. I fell to my knees and heard Bella scream again.*

*Jacob sauntered over to me and crouched down in front of me. "You're dead, fucker." Jacob pulled out a knife and sliced my throat. I faintly heard my own voice gurgle before blackness consumed me.*

I shot out of bed, my heart was racing. I felt my throat and realized that it was just a dream. I looked down at my Bella and pulled her close to my body. I needed to feel her warmth. I cried silently until a dreamless sleep finally fell over me.

**A/N: So, what do you think? Up next is finals weeks, Collage Concert with Garrett and a sad departure of Bella back to Seattle.**

# Finals

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine! We made it to 100 reviews! Thank you for everyone who commented! Woo hoo!*

## Chapter 44: Finals

### BPOV

The next two weeks were a blur. Edward and I were so busy with the end of the semester. After we moved into our apartment and had our phone and internet set up, I contacted my family to inform them of the sudden change of my living situation. Renee was understanding. Charlie, not so much. However, he was supportive of Edward's quick thinking to get me out of the dorms and into a secure apartment. He still wasn't liking the idea of his only daughter living in sin. I then reminded him that Mom was pregnant with Emmett before they were married. Charlie grumbled and finally relaxed.

Before I knew it, I was preparing for vocal juries and my piano final. Before I knew it, I was turning in my final psychology paper and preparing my presentation. Before I knew it, I was putting finishing touches on my unit project for education. University Singers and Emerson Express did not have finals. Express was actually cancelled for the rest of the semester so we could focus on our studies. The only real finals that I was having were Music Theory, Italian and U.S. History. I was not concerned for Music Theory. However, Italian and U.S. History were troubling me. I decided that I would study with Angela for Italian and Edward and I would quiz each other for U.S. History.

I had completed my major projects for psychology and education and turned them in. My professors were happy that I completed them early. I wanted them off my chest. I wanted to focus my attention on my real finals.

## La Cantante

On the Monday that we moved into our apartment, Kellan sent over the contract for Breaking Midnight. Edward finally sent it to Jenks, his parents' attorney on Friday of that week. Jenks made some minor changes and we met with Kellan to discuss them on Saturday afternoon. Kellan made the changes happily and we signed the contract. We were going to begin playing on alternating Fridays and Saturdays beginning in February. We would be paid \$500 by the club, plus 5% of whatever they make that evening. We also are allowed to have a 'tip jar' for the band to earn some extra money.

In regard to the living situation, Edward and I moved in together seamlessly. We did not have any bumps as we got used to our living patterns. We actually pretty similar in how we handled things. Edward's only complaint was my crankiness in the morning. However, he knew about that since he had a 7:30 class with me. He didn't realize how cranky I really was until he saw me first thing in the morning when I was not coherent. Edward did love when I cooked. He was always raving about how awesome my cooking skills were. He teased that he gained ten pounds from living with me in the past two weeks. I rolled my eyes and smacked him.

Rosalie and Alice moved out our old room the Tuesday following our discovery of the room being trashed. They were in a double in Rathburn. While they moved themselves out, they also packed up my belongings that were not ruined and brought them to the apartment. The school did an appraisal of the damage done to the room and issued each of us checks for the lost items in our room. We each got about \$750. I was surprised as this as I didn't expect the university to take responsibility for the break-in.

The weekend before finals week, the students in Benjamin Cairo's piano studio had our piano performance final. It was a group thing. We all met at the small auditorium in Williams Academic Center. We all had chosen a piece for the piano performance final. It was based on our level of skill. Edward had originally planned on giving a half recital but with the recent developments, he and Benjamin decided to push his recital to next semester. In addition to the performance of the pieces, we were also given a sight reading piece, based on our level of proficiency and our major. The education majors were given a vocal score and asked to do part reading or to read the piano line. The piano

## La Cantante

performance majors were given a piano score and asked to sight read that.

I knew that I hadn't prepared as much as I should have. I was scrambling during my down time on campus to make up for the lost rehearsal time. The piece that I was playing for my prepared piece was the first movement of the Moonlight Sonata by Beethoven. Thank goodness that Benjamin didn't want it memorized. If I had to memorize it, I would have been dead. Edward and I arrived at the auditorium and we sat with some other music majors that worked with Benjamin. We were there for the better part of the evening. We arrived at 6 and didn't leave until after 9. Benjamin informed us that we did very well and received A's on our final report.

Before we left, I asked Edward to stay back. He was going to accompany me for my vocal jury. I wanted to run my piece with him in the performance space we were having our juries in. We did it a few times in his practice room and I felt like I was being overpowered by the piano. I also didn't want to blow out Edward's ear drum with my singing. For my vocal jury, I was singing "The Jewel Song" from the opera, *Faust*. It was insanely difficult as a singer. The piano part was even more so. When I asked Edward to play for me, he replied with an enthusiastic yes. When I handed him the music, he did not look happy. He grumbled something about hating sharps and he slowly read through it.

For our run-through, I stood in the crook of the piano and gave Edward a slight nod. He began the introduction and I entered. I sang apprehensively as I was not comfortable with the venue. Edward stopped a few times and pointed out some things that he heard. I listened and made some adjustments. By the end of our rehearsal, I was confident with my piece and I was comfortable with the venue and balance between the voice and piano. Edward told me that he could always fall back and that he would follow me.

He asked when my vocal jury was and I told him that it was at 3:00 on Monday. His jury was at 2:45 on Monday. He asked another piano major to play for him as he didn't want to dump too much on my lap. I rolled my eyes and told him that next semester that I would play for him. He eyed me warily and agreed, eventually. The blowjob I gave him also convinced him. Edward was slightly panicked when I took his cock into my mouth. He didn't want my

## La Cantante

voice to suffer because I swallowed his spunk. I replied that the warm saltiness is good for the vocal cords. Suffice it to say, he enjoyed his blowjob immensely.

xx LC xx

On Monday morning, Edward and I woke up early. We had our music theory final. Neither one of us was worried about this final. We were pulling solid A's in the class. Larry was confident that we would do well. However, we wanted to make sure that we got to class on time. We left our apartment at 7 and pulled up to Brandon at 7:15. We settled into our seats and waited for Larry to come into the classroom. I pulled out my pencil and tapped impatiently. Larry strolled in a few minutes after our class was supposed to start. He explained the test and said that after we were finished, we were free to go. He also apologized for the confusion with James and the drama he caused. He finished his diatribe with a heartfelt thanks of being a great class and he looked forward to working with us during second semester.

Larry distributed the tests and I neatly printed my name on the top of the test. I read through each question carefully before I answered them. It took me about an hour to complete my final. However, I was pleased with my responses. I smiled when I handed in my test into Larry. He shook my hand I left the classroom. Edward had finished before me and was waiting for me outside on the steps. We headed back to our apartment. I didn't have a final for the second session as it was for my education class. Edward dropped me off and he headed back to campus. He needed to take his biochemistry final. I needed to change for my vocal jury before my Italian final. Edward was going to pick me up after his biochem final and he was going to change for his jury while I took my Italian final.

While I was grateful for Edward's willingness to chauffeur me around, I felt incredibly guilty. I may have to pool my resources and purchase a car. I had some money saved and to my own surprise, I had discovered some money in my purse after my trip to get pots and pans. Edward told me that Esme didn't want me spending my money on those things. I rolled my eyes and put it into my savings account.

## La Cantante

Edward picked me up after his biochem final. He didn't look happy. He said that he felt that he bombed it and was not happy with that. I kissed him and told him that no matter what, he was going to do fine. He pretty much had to get a zero on the final in order to change his grade in the class. He was pulling a very high A, thanks to his lab partner. He dropped me off in front of my Italian final and wished me luck. He sped off and I walked into my Italian final. I finished it within a half hour of the test being distributed. I felt semi-confident in my answers. I was going to be happy if I got a B in the class.

When I was done with my Italian final, it was nearly two in the afternoon. I walked to Williams Academic Center to wait for my vocal jury. As I waited, I studied for my U.S. History final. Jasper was in the jury room as I walked into the reception area of the auditorium. He was singing "The Erl King" by Franz Schubert. He sounded very good and very confident. After he was done, Jasper walked out and Edward followed behind him.

"Hey guys," I said with a smile. "Jas, I heard you through the door. You sounded awesome."

"Thanks, Bella. I totally flubbed on some of the words, but I kept going. Thanks, Edward for filling in last minute in being my accompanist," Jasper said appreciatively.

"No problem, Jasper. At least it was a song I knew," Edward said with a crooked grin.

"What happened to your original accompanist?" I asked.

"He got the flu. He's puking right now," Jasper grumbled.

"Ouch, that sucks," I said sympathetically.

"When I told my voice teacher what happened, she said that I had to take a zero and fail this semester for voice lessons unless I found a new accompanist," Jasper replied coldly. "Thankfully, I texted Edward and he knew the piece. We met up about a half hour ago and ran it until we were comfortable."

## La Cantante

"Your song is hard, Jas. However, Bella's is much more challenging. I hate fucking sharps," Edward mumbled.

"I'm sorry that my song is in the key of E-major, with four sharps, Edward," I laughed. "I thought I made it up to you last night."

"You did. Believe me, I was very happy last night. However, that does not change my attitude toward sharps. They are evil and should be banned from music," Edward said as he crossed his arms over his chest.

"Oh, okay, Edward. You are being unreasonable," I giggled. "Are you ready for your jury?"

"No. I was too stressed about playing for Jasper's. I didn't get a chance to run my piece. Hopefully, I won't flub too badly," he said with a scowl.

"You'll do wonderfully, Edward. You always do," I said confidently. He nodded and pulled out his song. He sat down on one of the benches and hummed lightly through his piece. He was singing an obscure French piece and was definitely struggling with the pronunciation. I helped him the best that I could. I had taken French in high school. However, sung French is different than spoken French. Promptly at 2:45, the jury room opened up and Edward walked in with a nervous smile. His accompanist began the opening strains of his song. Edward entered confidently and he got through the whole piece. He made a few mistakes, flip flopping words but managed to cover them quite effectively. I heard a low rumble from the vocal instructors and they dismissed him from the jury room.

Edward walked out and sank to the floor. "Thank God that's over. I love performing. I really do. However, juries suck. I feel like I'm being executed," he said from the floor.

"Thanks for warning me, Edward," I said with a nervous look on my face.

"Bella, I'm sorry. You'll do fine. You are much more prepared than I am when it comes to your vocal jury. You will kick some serious ass. Trust me," Edward

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said as he gracefully stood up and cupped my face. One of the instructors poked their head out and announced it was my time to go. Edward kissed my nose and he slipped back into the room with my music. I took a deep breath and strode self-assuredly into the jury room. I stood in the crook of the piano and nodded to Edward. He gave me a smile and began my piece. I put on my performance cap and acted out the song. The character was talking about all the different jewels that she had inherited. I moved and performed the piece. By the end, I was very happy with my performance. I could tell that the instructors were as well.

"That was done very well, Ms. Swan. Every semester, we put on an honors recital. We'd like you to perform your jury piece in that recital," said Dr. Banner, one of the senior members of the vocal instruction staff.

"I'd be more than happy to perform for the honors recital," I replied.

"Excellent. We'll send you some information regarding the time and location in your school email over your break. We also look forward to your next performance," Dr. Banner said with a smile.

I nodded and swiftly exited the jury room. Edward was on my heels. As soon as the door was opened and we were ushered out of the room, Edward wrapped his arms around me and swung me around. "Bella! That was fucking awesome!" he gushed.

"I was just acting out the song," I laughed as Edward placed me on my feet.

"Bella, as long as I've been here and as long as I've been aware of Emerson University, no freshman has ever been offered a place in the honor's recital. This is huge! You should be so proud of yourself," Edward said kissing my face. "I know that I am."

My cheeks were flushed with pink and I smiled shyly. "I had no idea," I muttered.



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"I don't even know what to say, Bella. I love you so much," Edward said reverently. He leaned down and kissed me sweetly, lightly nibbling on my lower lip. " *Il mio cantante.*"

" *Il suo cantante.* I love you too, Edward."

Edward kissed me a few more times before offering me his hand. We needed to head off his old high school for the Collage Concert with Garrett. Edward had rehearsed with the groups on Friday. I wanted to come to the rehearsal, but had to go to the mall with Jasper for Alice's Christmas present. I also picked up a few things for Alice, Rose and Edward for the holidays.

We got into Edward's car and sped off to the choral concert. We stopped on the way and picked up some dinner at a local diner. We finally arrived at Edward's alma mater and walked into the building. The school was open due to the Collage Concert. Edward did swing by the office to say hi to Mrs. Cope. She got all flustered as Edward flirted with her. I giggled at their interaction. After my flirtatious boyfriend wished Mrs. Cope a happy holidays, we headed to the choir room. Garrett was in his office, wearing a tuxedo with a red bowtie. He had asked Edward to dress in black. He complied, wearing a red tie. I also wore a black dress with a red scarf that was artfully wrapped around my neck. Edward knocked lightly on the door. Garrett turned around and gave him a smile.

"Edward! Thank you so much for playing tonight. Before I forget, here's our agreed upon payment," Garrett said as he handed Edward an envelope.

"It's no problem. The pieces were a lot of fun to learn. The arrangement of 'O Come, O Come Emmanuel' was absolutely gorgeous," Edward said kindly.

"Bella, I'm so glad that you were able to make it. I have a surprise for you," Garrett said with an impish grin.

"Oh, goodness. Do I want to know?" I said, my cheeks flushing pink.

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"It's a good thing. The Treble Choir really wanted you to conduct one of their pieces, 'This Little Babe,' from *Ceremony of Carols* by Benjamin Britten. The piece you worked with them on during sectionals. I said I'd ask you. So?" Garrett pressed. He handed me a copy of the music and I bit my lip. I looked at Edward and he rubbed my shoulders.

"Okay, I'll do it," I relented.

"I was hoping you would say that. They will be here in about ten minutes to run it with you," Garrett beamed. "Go work with your accompanist and discuss tempos."

Garrett shoed us out of his office and into the choir room. Edward took out his binder of music and turned to the Treble Choir section. I sat down next to Edward on the piano bench. "How fast did Garrett take this during the rehearsal on Friday?"

"Pretty fast. He conducted it in one, not in three. The only time he went to a traditional three pattern was at the end," Edward said as he flipped through his music. Edward played through the introduction at the tempo that he worked out with Garrett. I nodded and gave him a nervous smile. "You'll do awesome, Bella."

"I know. It's still nerve racking," I mumbled. My nerves quickly dissipated when I heard the Treble Choir enter the choir room. They all screamed and huddled around the piano. I covered my ears and gave them a huge smile. "Hello, ladies! You all look so lovely!"

They all giggled and said their thank yous. "Did Mr. Sisko mention to you about our request?" asked one of the seniors.

"Yes, he did. I was working with...what does Mr. Sisko call you?" I smirked at Edward.

"It was funny, but he called me Mr. Cullen. He pretty much demanded I do my observation hours here and he wanted to set the precedent that I was Mr.

Cullen," Edward laughed.

"Anyhow, I was working with Mr. Cullen on tempos and what you've worked with Mr. Sisko," I explained. "Let's do a quick warm up and then we'll run the piece a few times, okay?"

The girls went to their places on the choir risers. I gently nudged Edward out of the way. I wanted to lead the warm ups, while being behind the piano. I worked with them for about five minutes before I turned to the music that Garrett had handed me. I stood on the podium and mentally got the tempo in my head. Once I was comfortable, I turned and faced Edward and gave him two measures. He came in confidently and I moved my body to face the girls. I cued them to enter and we were off and running. We ran the piece a few more times until I was more comfortable. After our run through, the girls were ecstatic and ready to perform.

One of the sophomores was eyeing my ring. She got a huge grin on her face and her hand shot up. I called on her, "Miss Swan, did you get engaged?" she asked.

"No. It's not an engagement ring. It's a promise ring," I clarified. "My boyfriend gave it to me."

"I know it's none of my business, but is he cute?" she continued.

My cheeks flamed and I responded, "Ask him. He's at the piano." We were bombarded with screeches.

Garrett poked his head out of the office, "Now, ladies, that is not appropriate vocal behavior before a concert," he admonished.

"Why didn't you tell us that Mr. Cullen was Miss Swan's boyfriend?"

"It's not my place nor is it your business, Shelly," he laughed. "I figured you ladies would have caught on to that. He was here on the first day that Miss Swan came to work with you."

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"Oh, okay. Just to let you both know, you make a cute couple," Shelly said with a wink.

Edward blushed and laughed from the piano. "Thanks for the vote of confidence, Shelly," I giggled. "Let's run the song one more time, okay?" I held my arms up and the girls fixed their posture and prepared for the final run through before the end of the mini-rehearsal.

The rest of the choral groups came into the choir room and Garrett ran warm ups, with Edward behind the piano. Garrett touched a few spots that were troublesome from the rehearsal on Friday. After the brief run through and some announcements, the mixed choir headed out to the auditorium.

The Collage Concert was very unique. It was with the band and choir. It was an influx of music, with no breaks. The groups performed in various spots in the auditorium throughout the concert. The mixed choir, for example, was in the aisles of the auditorium. The next choir that performed was the madrigal singers and they were singing from the catwalk. Edward moved in the auditorium from the electric piano to the grand piano. The song that the Treble Choir was singing with me was toward the end of the program. They were on the stage and Edward used the grand piano. At the end of the concert, the band was on the stage and the choirs were on the floor of the auditorium singing a combined piece. Garrett handed both Edward and I a score and were told to sing with the choirs.

The concert began promptly at 7. The recorder ensemble from the band began the concert. The next group that sang was the mixed choir. Edward sat down at the electric piano and Garrett began their piece. The concert continued on with the band and choir alternating songs. Before the Treble Choir was to sing the piece I was conducting, Garrett stepped onto the stage saying that I was his student teacher from the fall. The women from Treble Choir insisted I conduct the piece and would not take no for an answer. The audience chuckled and I walked out onto stage. Edward settled himself behind the piano and winked. I held up my arms and gave my cue. Edward entered and I turned away from him and gave the Treble Choir their entrance. They performed the piece very well and I conducted it fairly well, since I was essentially sight reading the

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piece. After we ended the piece, I gave a small bow and the next group began playing. The curtains closed and Edward and I rushed out to the auditorium to play the final piece before the finale.

The last choral piece before the finale was the concert choir. The rest of the groups filed in and stood mixed in between each other. Edward and I stood on the end, next to each other. Some of the Treble Choir girls gave us some grief and we both chuckled and said we were sight reading. They laughed and said that tonight we could stand together, but tomorrow we needed to mix in with the choir. Garrett stood in the back of the auditorium and watched the band director. We all watched Garrett for our entrance. He gave it to us clearly and we sang the finale. At the conclusion of the finale, Garrett clasped his hands together and made a sweeping gesture to the choirs. The audience cheered at the concert. Garrett then ran up onto the stage. He ran past Edward and I told us to join him on the stage. We followed him and joined the band director and Garrett in a group bow.

The curtains closed and Edward and I let out a collective sigh of relief. Garrett shook both of our hands and he ushered us off the stage. We picked up our things from the choir room and headed out to Edward's car and went back to our apartment. As soon as we got back, I dumped my bag into the office and went to take a quick shower. I was taking out my contacts when I heard the bathroom door open behind me. Edward slipped in and wrapped his arms around my waist.

"I love you, beautiful girl," he said into my hair. I popped out my contacts and put them into their case. I turned around in Edward's arms and weaved my fingers into his soft hair. I pulled his face down to mine and caressed my lips against his. He pulled me closer to his hard body and he moaned. "It's been too long."

I giggled against his lips, "You got a blowjob last night," I teased.

"I need to feel you. I need to be inside of you, Bella," he growled. He unzipped my dress and began peeling it away from my body. His lips assaulted my neck and I leaned against the bathroom counter. The dress fell to my feet in a puddle

of black material. I was left with my black lacy bra and black boy shorts. I reached for Edward's tie and pulled it from his neck and moved to the buttons of his shirt.

"Oh, Edward," I moaned wantonly. His lips move to my breasts and he freed them from the bra with one quick snap of his fingers. I pushed Edward's shirt off his shoulders and forcefully pulled his face back to mine, crashing my lips against his. Our tongues fought for dominance in each other's mouths. He picked me up and put me on top of the bathroom counter, standing between my legs. I reached for the buckle of his dress pants and pulled it away from his waist. I undid the button and pushed his pants down his legs. His hands moved to my panties and he pulled them down my legs, spreading them as far as they could. He knelt in front of me, pulling me close to the edge of the counter, and sucked on my inner thigh. He looked up at me through his long lashes and smirked before diving into my pussy. His tongue moved to my entrance and he licked and nibbled there. I leaned back against the mirror of the bathroom and moved my hips in conjunction to Edward's tongue. He licked the length of my slit and pulled my clit between his teeth and plunged two fingers into me. He curled his fingers and I writhed at his touch. "Fuck me."

"Very soon, beautiful girl," Edward mumbled against my thigh. He went back to his ministrations and my body was ready to spring. However, Edward was not having that. As I was getting close, he would pull away and lightly caress my thighs with his tongue and his fingers.

"Edward, you're driving me crazy," I breathed, my chest heaving. "I need you. Please."

He chuckled and he plunged another finger into me and pounded with his hands in my pussy. He licked and bit down on my clit. I screamed and my body clenched down around his fingers, coming on his face. He eagerly lapped up all I had to offer. He was still pumping his fingers in me when I faintly heard his boxers fall to the ground and he lined his cock up with my entrance. His intense gaze met with mine and he slid into me. We both moaned at the sensation. I came as he entered me and I know he could feel it. He moved his hips and he thrust in and out of me. "Fuck, you are so beautiful, Bella. I love

seeing you like this," he said as he leaned down to kiss me. He moved gently in and out of me but I wanted more.

"Edward, I need to feel all of you. Harder," I growled. My eyes were feral and I gripped his hair.

"Fuck me," he replied and he began pounding into my body. My breasts bounced at his pace and his mouth was slightly open. He looked into my eyes, "I'm going to make you come so hard, Bella. You'll never know what hit you."

"Oh, god, please," I begged. His hand moved in between us and he circled his fingers around my clit. His other hand was cupped around my neck and his lips were moving with mine. He angled his thrusts so he could penetrate me deeper. When he did that, my eyes rolled back in my head and I could feel my body react to the new sensation. His rhythm was becoming erratic and his breathing was ragged.

"I need to feel you, Bella. I need you to come. I need you to come now," he commanded. His gaze was so passionate, I complied without even realizing it. My muscles clenched tightly around his cock and I screamed. Edward groaned as he emptied into me, thrusting until we both were done. He gently picked me up and sat us down on the floor of the bathroom, both sweaty and spent from our orgasms. "Shit. That was fucking intense."

"Yeah, it was," I breathed against his chest. "I love you, Edward. I don't want to move."

"I love you more, beautiful. I don't want to move, either," he chuckled.

"However, my lower back is saying otherwise." I moved away from him and he left my body. I frowned at the loss of the connection. I stood up stiffly and quickly turned on the shower. Edward was still sitting on the floor with a look of complete bliss. I held out my hand to help him up. I tried to move him but he pulled me back down to the floor with him, holding me to his chest. "I'm really going to miss you. I don't want you to leave, Bella. I feel like part of my heart, the biggest part, is going with you. I wish I could come with you."

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His arms wrapped around my naked body and he buried his face into the crook of my neck. "I wish you could come with me too, but you have your commitments to your family. So do I. We'll see each other the day after Christmas. I'll be picking you up at SeaTac and having wild monkey sex in the car."

Edward snorted into my hair, "Wild monkey sex? I can't wait."

"Me neither. However, let's settle for some steamy shower sex," I giggled. "Up. My ass is cold."

Edward relinquished his hold on me and I stood up, once again offering my hand to him. He took it and stood up. We got into our large shower and unfortunately didn't have shower sex. Edward's lower back was spasming and I didn't want him to get injured. We did take turns in washing each other. Edward lovingly washed my hair, running his long fingers through the wet strands. He then massaged my body wash onto my body. After I was sufficiently clean, I returned the favor. I pushed Edward down on to the small bench in the shower and washed his hair. I lightly scratched his scalp and he leaned into my hands, humming quietly. I then rubbed his body wash onto his muscular torso, strong arms, and solid legs. When I was finished washing him, he pulled me into his lap and held me close. We stayed there for a few minutes, just enjoying the time together that we had, knowing that we would be separated in a matter of days.

Edward turned off the water and grabbed a few towels, handing one to me. I wrapped it around my body and stepped out of the shower, walking into our bedroom. I pulled out a pair of fuchsia boy shorts and slipped them under my towel. I then grabbed a pair of silky pink sleep shorts and a matching strappy tank top. I went back into the bathroom and grabbed our laundry and tossed it in the basket in our closet. I would have to do laundry before going to the concert tomorrow so I would have clothes in Forks. Edward pulled on a pair of boxer briefs and lay down on the bed.

"Get on your belly, Cullen," I demanded.



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He arched a brow but complied. I picked up some lotion from the bathroom and straddled his ass. I took off my ring and put it on the bedside table. I squirted the lotion into my hands and began massaging Edward's lower back. "Shit, that feels so good," he mumbled into his pillow. I worked my fingers over his knots in his back, trying to relieve some his tension. I spent a good half hour massaging his back and shoulders. He was snoring lightly when I finished. I was pleased that I could relax him so much that he could fall asleep. I took the lotion and brought it back to the bathroom and put it on the counter. I quickly washed my hands and slipped my ring back on my finger.

"Edward," I whispered into his ear. "You need to get under the covers."

"Don't wanna. Too comfy. You turned my body into jelly," he mumbled sleepily.

"I can't really get comfortable until you get under the covers, baby. Please?" I coerced, running my fingers over his back, tenderly scratching his smooth skin. He moaned and slipped under the covers. I reached over and turned off the lamp and curled up under the blankets. Edward pulled me to his chest and spooned with me. He pressed a kiss to the most sensitive spot behind my ear. "Love you, handsome."

"Love you more, my beautiful Bella," he replied and we fell into a deep sleep.

xx LC xx

We didn't have a final for Aural Harmony. Originally, Larry wanted us to have a final, but he decided against it. What he had originally planned wouldn't work without a teaching assistant. It wouldn't fit in the allotted time for the final. Larry just informed us that if we were getting a C or below, we would have to take the final. That didn't affect Edward or I. I was getting a 100%, A. Edward was getting a low A, struggling with some of the concepts. However, Larry said that Edward would not need to take the final.

So, the only final that I was taking was U.S. History. Edward had history and Calculus. I still set my alarm fairly early so I could get a head start on the

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laundry. The alarm went off at 8 in the morning. I didn't want to move. I was so comfortable in Edward's arms. I hit the snooze and fell asleep for another ten minutes. I decided to get up after the snooze and I padded to the bathroom. I brushed my teeth and hair, pulling it into a messy bun. I then grabbed a hoodie from the closet and put it on. I bent down and grabbed our laundry basket and walked to our laundry room. I separated our clothes into lights and darks and threw the lights into the washer. I then grabbed my suitcase from the closet in the office and set it on the full-sized bed there. Afterward, I went into the kitchen and pulled the ingredients for blueberry pancakes. I whipped up a batch of pancakes and was plating them when Edward walked into the kitchen directly heading for the coffee pot. He poured himself a cup and slurped it up. He was still in just his boxer briefs and his hair was sticking up everywhere. He had some lines on his face from the pillows and he had a bit of scruff growing on his handsome face. I put a plate of pancakes on the table and Edward sat in front of the plate and began eating.

"Morning, sunshine," I teased. "Did you sleep well?"

"Not so loud, baby. I woke up this morning at like three with the worst headache ever," Edward said, rubbing his eyes. "I fucking hate migraines. They're worse than sharps. Looking at all those sharps yesterday made my head implode."

"I'm sorry, Edward. Do you have some medication you can take?" I asked.

"I already took it. My head still hurts, but now it's just a dull ache. However, I need to take some more if I want to get through the day without turning into a bitch," he said with a smirk.

"Edward, you can never be a bitch. That is only reserved for women," I joked.

"Trust me, I turn into a bitch when I get headaches like this. You don't want to be around me if I don't have my medication. It's not pleasant," he said with a grimace. "I get these from my sperm donor. He used to get migraines like this."

"That sucks, Edward. What are your triggers?"

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"Stress, being overtired, scallops," he explained.

"Scallops?"

"Yeah. I love 'em. However, I can't eat them without getting a migraine. It's not worth the trouble," he said as he finished his pancakes. He piled on two more pancakes onto his plate and covered them with maple syrup. I was still working on my original two. He finished his breakfast and he washed his plates and the griddle. I finished up my breakfast and he took my plate and washed it up.

"Thanks for the breakfast, Bella. I definitely will be taking advantage of the workout area of the apartment if you keep cooking for me like that."

"Oh, please, Edward. You're fine," I said. "You are still hot."

"Yeah, okay. My dress pants from yesterday were a bit tight in the stomach. I need to work out. My lazy ass is getting fat," he said as he pinched the non-existent fat on his side. "I'm actually going to head down there after I take my headache medication. Want to come?"

"No, not really. I just started a load of laundry and I need to pack for my trip home," I said with a frown.

Edward's mouth turned down and his eyes were sad. "I really wish I could come with you. I have this strange feeling that something is going to happen."

"It'll be fine. My dad and Emmett are going to be with me," I said as I wrapped my arms around his neck. His hands traveled south to my ass and rested there. "You can't protect me for the rest of my life, Edward. It's not possible."

"Still doesn't mean I can't try," he said petulantly. He kissed my forehead and held me close to his body. "I love you too much. I wish I could make sure that you're safe and that Jacob would just fall off the face of the earth."

"I love you too, Edward. However, you don't see me stressing over the fact that you're going to near Tanya," I laughed.

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"Bella. That is entirely different. Tanya is not a 7 foot tall Native American who could kill you. The worse she could do is scratch my balls off, if I let her close enough, which I have no intention of doing so," Edward growled. "Please promise me that you will not go anywhere alone while you're home. Make sure that Emmett or Charlie is with you. Please. I beg you. Please."

"I will try," I said honestly. "Go work out, fattie."

"Just call me 'Chunk,'" he laughed. "I'll be back in an hour or so." Edward kissed me quickly and dashed into our bedroom to change. I put the dishes and griddle away. I then moved the laundry to the dryer and placed the next load into the washer. Edward was walking to the door with a iPod shuffle strapped to his arm, wearing a pair of running shorts, running shoes and a t-shirt. "Be back soon, beautiful. Sure you don't want to come?"

"I'm good, Edward. Have fun," I said kissing his nose. He grabbed his keys and gave me a lopsided grin before heading out of the apartment. As he worked out, I managed to pack my suitcase with the stuff that was not in the washer or dryer. I also spent some time studying for my history final. I was a bit stressed about this test because I was never good with dates. Jasper told me that his professor was not going to focus on the dates, but the basic 'happenings' of the era we studied.

The dryer buzzed and I pulled the clothes out of the dryer and put in the darks. I folded my clothes and set them into my suitcase. I hung up Edward's clothes in our closet and put his socks and underwear in his drawer. I pulled out what I was going to wear for the Collage Concert tonight from our closet and hung it on the bathroom door. I was going to wear a pair black pantsuit with a green blouse. I also pulled out my heels to wear with my suit. I heard the door open up and Edward strolled into the bedroom. His shirt was covered in sweat and his face was bright pink. He gave me a sloppy kiss on the cheek, covering me with his sweat before heading into the bathroom to shower. I swatted at him as he moved away and he laughed.

I finished packing and finally decided to get ready for my final. I pulled on a pair of jeans and my Emerson hoodie. Edward had to go to his finals all

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dressed up because I had to pick up from his calculus final and head straight to his high school. Edward was shaving in the bathroom when I went in there to put on some make up. He had on a pair of black dress pants that were unbuttoned as he shaved. I sat down on the counter and pulled on his belt loops, positioning him between my legs. "What are you doing, beautiful?" he asked.

I took the razor from his hand and dipped it into the warm water in the sink. I raised my hands and shaved his face. He was very tentative as I moved my hand to his face. I warned with my eyes for him to trust me. I finished shaving his face and rubbed a warm towel over his handsome features. He hummed at my gentle touch. I picked up his aftershave and put some on my hands. I massaged into his smooth cheeks. I wiped my hands and smile at him. "No one has ever done that to me, Bella. Thank you," he said, awestruck.

"I used to shave Charlie when I was younger. I was fascinated with the whole thing. One day he handed me the razor and he had me shave his face. It wasn't good the first time, but eventually whenever he used the razor, I did it for him," I explained. "I'm still fascinated with the whole shaving phenomenon. I only do it to people that I love unconditionally."

"Well, I love you unconditionally, completely and for the rest of my life, Bella," Edward said with a smile. "You may have to do that from now on. That was the closest shave I've ever gotten." Edward rubbed his hands over his cheeks and gave me a smirk.

"We aim to please, Edward. You almost ready?" I asked.

"Yep. I just need to put on my shirt and tie and then we can go."

He dashed into the closet and pulled out another black shirt and a green tie. He put the shirt on and tucked it into his pants, buckling the belt. He quickly tied his tie around his neck and grabbed his messenger bag and phone. I picked up my bag from the office and my own phone. Edward handed me the car keys and we headed to the garage. I eased his Volvo out of the parking spot and drove to where our history final was being held. I parallel parked on the street

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and we went into the classroom. Jasper handed out the tests and we began as soon as we got them. I finished before Edward. I waited outside for him. He walked out about ten minutes later.

Edward reminded me to pick him up in front of the science building after his calculus final. He would text me when he was done. I drove back to the apartment and changed for the concert. I curled my hair and put on some makeup. I then pulled on my pant suit, blouse and heels. I sat down and checked my email, waiting for Edward's text. About a half hour later, he texted me and said that he was done. I hopped into the car and drove the science building. He was waiting outside and he slid into the passenger side. He gave me a heated kiss saying that he was happy that we were done with our finals. I gave him a coy smile and headed to his high school.

xx LC xx

The second evening of the Collage Concert was as successful as the first night. The students presented Edward and I with a small token of their appreciation. The choirs chipped in and gave Edward a choral folder that said the same thing that I had on mine that they gave me. They also got us flowers. After the concert, we drove back to our apartment and had to immediately go straight to bed. My flight the next morning was early. Edward was driving both Emmett and I to the airport.

I checked in online before going to bed and fell into a fitful sleep. I did not want to go home. I truly didn't. While I didn't want to admit to Edward, I was terrified that Jacob would try something. Edward and I clung to each other as we slept.

When the alarm went off at 5 in the morning, we both groaned. We showered together. Washing each other, memorizing our bodies. We were both somber and sad. Edward put on a brave face, but I couldn't do it. I didn't want to leave. I wanted to stay. I wanted to be with Edward. He was home to me. As much as I love Charlie and Renee, I never felt that way with them. We ate a quick breakfast of cereal before we headed to Patterson to pick up Emmett. Edward stowed my suitcase in the trunk of his car. I tossed my purse and messenger

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bag in the back seat. I had my cell phone in my pocket of my jacket. I took it out and shot Emmett a text.

*We're on our way, Brother Bear. Meet us out back - B*

*Got it, Isabelly. Ready for the rain? - Em*

*No. Don't want to go :( - B*

*I know, Isabelly. I don't want to, either - Em*

I slipped my phone back into my pocket and leaned my head back on the headrest. I closed my eyes and I willed the tears to not fall. Edward reached across the console and laced his fingers with mine. I turned and looked at him. His eyes were glistening with unshed tears. He was feeling the same way. He gave me a supportive smile and squeezed my hand as we pulled into the parking lot of Patterson. Emmett was waiting outside, holding onto Rosalie. Edward popped open the trunk and got out of the car. Emmett pulled Rosalie into a tight embrace. His shoulders were shaking and I knew he was crying. Rose pulled away and cupped his face, giving him a hot, sensual kiss. Emmett reached down and picked up Rosalie. She wrapped her legs around his waist and clung to him. I got out of the car and walked to Rosalie and Emmett. They eventually extracted themselves from each other. I gave Rose a hug, saying I was going to miss her. She said that she was going to try and fly out for New Years, but there were no guarantees. Emmett got into the backseat of Edward's Volvo. I got back into the passenger seat and Edward eased out of the parking lot.

We drove for an hour and half to the airport in silence. We were all sad at the prospect of leaving. Edward pulled into the parking garage and helped us unload our bags. Edward rolled my suitcase and held my hand, very tightly. With my other hand, I was holding Emmett's hand. We walked through the ticket counter and checked our baggage, my heart getting heavier. After that, Edward waited for us in the security line, his arms securely around my waist. When we got close to the front, tears fell down my cheeks. I wrapped my arms around Edward's neck and sobbed. "I don't want to leave you, Edward. I can't

do this!"

"I know, baby. I can't either. I love you so much, beautiful," he cried into my hair. He held me tightly and we rocked. "I'll see you in less than two weeks. We'll talk every day. Please know that my half of my heart is going with you to Seattle. I love you, Bella. I will always love you."

I continued to sob as we garnered stares from the other travelers. "I love you so much, Edward. I wish you were coming with us."

"I know, Bella. I know. I wish I was coming with you," Edward said as he cupped my face. The family behind us cleared their throats and we knew that we needed to get moving. Edward placed a searing kiss on my lips. "I love you with all of my heart, all of my soul, with everything I have. Please be safe and call me as soon as you land."

I nodded and I caressed his face, gazing into his forest green eyes. "I love you with all of my heart and please know that I will be incomplete without you, Edward." He embraced me and stepped out of the security line, tears falling down his cheeks. I looked back at him as I handed my boarding pass to the security person and walked through the metal detector, following Emmett. As soon as I got my cell phone, I sent Edward a text.

*Please take care of my heart, I've left it with you. I love you, Edward - Bella*

Emmett dragged me to the gate and as soon as we got there, I fell apart.

**A/N: Okay, having them say goodbye just sucked. I mean, big time. Up next will be Emmett and Bella working on Edward's present, Swan family Christmas and ... well read and you'll find out :)**



# Video Remembrances, Tattoos, Announcements

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 45: Video Remembrances, Tattoos, Announcements...Oh MY!

### BPOV

I didn't remember the flight to Seattle. I spent most of the flight crying into Emmett's shoulder. I never knew how much leaving Edward would hurt. I wanted to hop on the next flight back to New York to be closer to him as soon as we landed. My body hurt, my heart hurt, my head hurt, everything just hurt.

We landed at SeaTac and headed down to the baggage claim. As soon as I was out of the plane, I whipped out my phone and called Edward.

"Hello?"

"We've landed, baby," I cooed into the phone.

"How was the flight?" Edward asked, sadness lacing his tone.

"I honestly don't know. I spent most of it crying," I responded.

"If it's any consolation, I'm in bed, hugging your pillow because it smells like you," Edward said with a sad chuckle. "I also took one of your t-shirts from your suitcase."

I giggled "Okay, Edward. First you pilfer my panties and now my shirts? What am I going to do with you?"

"Love me?" he asked.

"Always, Edward," I sighed.

"Oh, I put one of your Christmas presents in your suitcase. Open it on Christmas Eve. You'll get the rest of your present when I see you on the 26th," Edward said cryptically.

"I also put one of your presents in your top right drawer in the dresser. You'll also get your main present when I see you after Christmas," I said with an impish grin on my face. I had gotten Edward a really nice watch for part of present. His watch that he had was falling apart; the band was hanging on by a thread.

"Can I open it now?" Edward asked with a note of enthusiasm in his voice.

"No! You need to wait until Christmas Eve, just like me, buddy," I teased.

"Oh, fine. You're no fun," he grouched.

"Okay, Edward. Whatever. I'm at baggage claim and I need to get my suitcase and head out to Forks. Charlie is picking us up. I love you, baby. I miss you tremendously," I said.

"I miss you more, beautiful. Only ten days until we see each other again. Not that I'm counting or anything," he laughed.

"Do you have it figured out to the minute, yet?" I teased.

"If my calculations are correct, I'll be in the same state as you in 10 days, three hours and fourteen minutes," he said proudly.

"You are such a nerd."

"But I'm YOUR nerd. And you love me."

## La Cantante

"Yes, I do. I gotta go, Edward. I see Charlie. I'll call you later tonight. I love you so much," I said.

"I love you more, beautiful. Call me anytime. I don't care. I probably won't be sleeping that well without you anyways," he said with a wistful sigh.

"Bye, Edward."

"Bye, Bella. Love you."

I hung up the phone and slipped it into my pocket. I smiled, or at least tried to smile as I approached Charlie. He held open his arms and I melted into my father's embrace. As I wrapped my arms around him, I noticed that he had gotten thinner since I saw him in September. I pulled away and looked into his eyes. They were tired and his face was drawn. It also looked he had more gray hair in his chestnut hair and in his mustache.

"How are you doing, old man?" Emmett boomed.

"I'm good, Emmett. How are things treating you at Emerson?" Charlie said as he shook Emmett's hand.

"Good. Really good. I met a girl. Let me rephrase. *THE GIRL*," Emmett gushed.

"That's wonderful, Emmett. We'll talk more on the ride back home. Do you both have everything?" Charlie asked. We both nodded and we walked out to the parking garage. We loaded our bags into the trunk in my dad's Malibu. I sat in the backseat and Emmett sat in the front with my dad. I lay down across the backseat and fell asleep on the four hour drive up to Forks.

When we arrived at our tiny home in Forks, Emmett carried me to my room. I feigned sleep as he moved me from the car to my tiny bed. I curled up and fell into a deep sleep, wishing I had Edward's strong arms around me.

xx LC xx

## La Cantante

I woke up about three hours later. My stomach was rumbling. I hadn't eaten anything since my bowl of cereal at 6 in the morning, eastern time. It was now three in the afternoon, pacific time. My belly was empty. I went downstairs and found Emmett and Charlie watching television in the family room.

"How was your nap, Bells?" Charlie asked as he took sip of his Vitamin R.

I shrugged and walked to the kitchen. I poked around in the fridge and made myself a sandwich. I got a soda and some chips and plopped down on the couch in the family room, next to Emmett. I ate my sandwich and chips in silence, sipping my pop.

"Bella, you can't stay silent the entire time you're home," Charlie chided. "I know that you miss Edward. But, please enjoy your time with your *family*."

"I know, Dad. I'm just feeling a little lonely," I began. Emmett and Charlie glared at me. "Okay, a lot lonely. I never knew it could hurt this badly."

"Bella, I miss Rosalie tremendously, but I'm not going to mope around the house while I'm home on vacation. Enjoy the time with Charlie and me," Emmett said with a grin.

"I guess I'll just focus my energies on Edward's Christmas present. Speaking of which, Emmett, can you go with me to Seattle tomorrow?"

"What's in Seattle?" Emmett asked.

"Esme sent me a bunch of videos from Edward's childhood. I'm having them put onto a DVD, along with pictures of he and his mom. A friend from high school runs a business in Seattle that does just that," I said with a grin.

"So, that's what was in that huge box I got from New York," Charlie responded.

"Yeah. I'm going through them tonight after dinner and sort the videos and pictures before we can go. We have an appointment at 12:30 tomorrow," I

explained.

"Can't you go by yourself, Isabelly?" Emmett whined.

"Normally, I would say yes, but I am kind of leery of Jacob just randomly showing up. That and I also promised Edward I wouldn't go anywhere without you or Dad," I said with a small grimace.

"Ugh, fine. However, if we get a chance, we're going to the mall to get Rose's present for Christmas," Emmett grumbled. "There's this heart pendant that I saw that I want to get her in the catalogue on the plane. There's an actual store at the mall in Seattle."

"Works for me. I'll have to spend a couple of hours setting up the videos and DVDs with Mark, my friend from high school, but then we're done. We'll have to pick them up in a week," I replied with a smile. "Thank you, Emmett. I really appreciate it."

I hopped up and went into the kitchen to pull some stuff out for dinner. I decided on making a quick meal of tacos and Spanish rice. That was all that we had the ingredients for. "Charlie! What's the deal with the food? Haven't you been eating?" I barked.

"Yes, Mom," he laughed. "I've been eating microwave dinners. I went shopping on Monday. Obviously I didn't get enough if you're yelling at me."

"Charlie, you're getting too thin. You need to eat more," I admonished.

"Bella, I'm fine," he said, with a smile that didn't quite reach his eyes.

"Yeah, okay. Sure you're fine, Dad. I can feel your ribs," I chided.

"I'm fine," he seethed. "Just drop it, Isabella." Charlie got up out of his recliner and stomped out the door to his car. I heard the car start and pull away from the house.

"Good job, Bella. Piss Dad off the first day we're back," Emmett retorted.

"Em, I'm worried about him. He's lost a ton of weight and there's just something not right," I responded sadly.

"He'll tell us in his own time. Just let him be," Emmett replied.

I rolled my eyes and went back into the kitchen to make dinner. I busied myself with sautéing the beef and mixing in the taco seasoning. I put some shredded cheese and lettuce into some bowls and heated up the taco shells in the microwave. I also made some Spanish rice. I finished up the meal with a salad and called Emmett into the kitchen. He lumbered in and sat down in one of the chairs at the table. He began digging into the tacos that I made. I sat down and barely ate anything. I was upset with my dad. I was upset with being away from Edward. I was just upset. It sucked.

Emmett and I ate in silence. Well, Emmett ate and I picked. After dinner, I put all of the leftover food into containers and left them in fridge for my dad, who still hadn't returned. I left a note on the refrigerator for Charlie so he knew that dinner was in there for him. Emmett did the dishes and I put them away. After we finished cleaning up the kitchen, I went upstairs to work on my project for Edward.

Esme was very organized in her boxes. I arranged the videos and pictures in chronological order based on the dates of the videos and on the backs of the pictures. Edward was a very cute baby. His eyes were even greener when he was little. His hair was a brighter version of what adorned the top of his head now. I lightly ran my fingers over his cherubic face in the pictures and smiled. I had also burned a DVD of all the videos that were sent to Esme via email. I typed up the plan of what I wanted, along with the songs I wanted added and where the pictures and email videos should lie. I sent the plan off to Mark and printed out a copy to bring with me tomorrow. In my original correspondence with Mark, he said that he could try and fit all of the videos and pictures onto ten DVDs for approximately \$200. He would also package them nicely with a collage of pictures that I choose for covers. Before I knew it, it was nearly eleven at night and my phone was ringing from my desk in my room.

## La Cantante

"Hello?" I breathed into the phone.

"Hey, beautiful," Edward replied.

"Hiya handsome. I was just thinking about you," I said as I settled down on my bed.

"What a coincidence. I was thinking about you, too. That's why I called you, silly girl," Edward snorted. "How are you doing?"

"Honestly?"

"No. I want you to lie," Edward teased.

"I'm fantastic. I just had the most mind blowing sex with my *other* boyfriend. It was fantastic," I replied enthusiastically.

"Oh, for the love of all that's holy, Bella," Edward grumbled.

"Truthfully, I miss you terribly. While talking on the phone is nice, it's a poor, poor substitute for the real thing. I miss your strong arms around me. I miss your soft lips caressing mine. I miss your smell. I miss your hair. I miss..."

"Okay, Bella. I get it. You miss me. Believe me, the feeling is quite mutual. I am so tempted to hop on a plane to be near you. So tempted. I almost did it when I made dinner tonight. I burnt my frozen pizza and I cried. You've spoiled me with your cooking," he said sadly.

"Well, you're more than welcome to fly out, handsome. Anytime. However, you'll probably be sleeping on the couch. Charlie would probably not like it if we slept in the same bed in his house," I giggled.

"I wouldn't mind it because it would be a hell of a lot closer than where we're at now. So, what's the plan for tomorrow?" Edward asked.

"I have an errand to run in Seattle," I grinned.

## La Cantante

"Is Emmett going with you?"

"Yep. After my errand, we're going to the huge mall in the city to get a present for Rosalie. How about you?"

"I'm going to work out. Mope around the apartment. Clean the bathroom. Watch some paint dry. Mope around the apartment some more. Miss you tremendously. Call you and text you repeatedly throughout the day. Miss you some more. So, yeah. Very exciting," he laughed.

"We're pathetic," I giggled.

"Yes, we are. I miss you laying next to me, beautiful. I'm in bed right now and I'm holding your pillow. I miss your warmth and how you feel," he purred.

"Me, too, Edward," I sat up and walked to my door. I shut it tight and locked it. "Want to try something?"

"What are you scheming, Bella?" Edward asked warily.

My face flushed and I swallowed a huge lump in my throat. "Phone sex?" I squeaked.

"I've never had phone sex before," he growled.

"Me neither. We're phone sex virgins," I laughed nervously. I put the phone on speaker and I slipped off my jeans and took off my hoodie. I was just in a tank top and a pair of navy blue boy shorts.

"What are you doing, Bella?" Edward asked.

I picked up the phone and held it to my ear after I clicked it off speaker. "I just got a bit more comfortable."

"What are you wearing, beautiful?" Edward cooed.



## La Cantante

I lay back on my pillows and lightly traced circles on the top of my thigh. "I'm wearing a tank top, bra and panties. How about you?"

"I'm in a pair of boxer shorts," Edward responded. "Take off your tank top, Bella."

"Hold on." I whipped off my shirt and tossed it on the floor. I reached behind my back and also slipped off my bra. "Okay, it's off."

"Good. Now, describe one of your sexual fantasies for me, beautiful. Do what you describe to yourself and imagine that it's me. I'll do the same over here."

"Well, I've always fantasized of making love in a car," I mumbled nervously.

"Hmm, me too. What would you want me to do to you first?" he purred.

"I'd want you to kiss my neck and run your hands down my body," I said as ran my fingers across my chest. I reached my breasts and took them into my hands. I closed my eyes and imagined it was Edward's hands on me. "I'd want your hands on my breasts."

"They're there, beautiful. Play with them for me. How does it feel?"

"So good, Edward. You always make me feel so good. What do you want me to do to you?"

I moved my hands from my breasts and squeezed the nipples, causing them to stand pert and erect. I could feel the moisture pool between my legs. I rubbed my thighs together to create friction. "Oh, baby. I'd want to feel your hands on me. You have such a light, delicate touch. It drives me insane. You'd trace my tattoo with your fingers and run your tongue along my body," Edward breathed. "Shit, baby, I'm so hard for you. I wish I was with you so I could feel you around my cock."

"Oh, Edward," I moaned. "Take off your boxers and feel yourself."

## La Cantante

I heard rustling and I continued my sensual assault on my chest. I groaned. "Oh, Bella. I'm rock hard. Straining for your pussy. Fuck."

"Put your hand around your cock, Edward. Imagine it's my mouth."

"Take off your panties, baby. Tell me how wet you are," Edward said huskily.

I slipped off my panties and put the phone on speaker. I slipped my hand between my legs and ran my finger over my clit. I was seeping. I moaned wantonly. "How wet are you, Bella? Are you dripping?"

"Fuck, yes. Only for you, Edward. Only you can make me feel like this," I sighed. I began rubbing my clit with my finger and my hips moved of their own volition. "I want you, Edward. I need you."

"Shit, baby. I need you so much," Edward groaned. "I need to be inside of you. To feel how tight you are around me. Put your fingers inside you behind. Tell me how tight you feel."

I slipped two fingers into my core, moaning loudly. I pumped my hand in and out of my body. My other hand fondled my clit. "Oh, Edward. So tight. So wet. Just for you."

"Fuck me. Bella, I'm close. Please tell me you're there," Edward grunted.

I moved my hands over my sex and I knew that I wasn't going to be much longer. "Oh, Edward. I'm with you. I need to hear you come. Please, baby. I love hearing you come." My hands worked furiously and my body was getting close. My hips were swiveling with the rhythm of my hands and with my breathing. Edward's breathing was becoming ragged on the end of the phone.

"Oh, Bella...I'm...fuck...Ungh," Edward roared.

At hearing him come, my own body responded and I felt my muscles clench around my fingers and I let out a silent scream as I came. I slowly returned to earth and I picked up the phone, cradling it between my shoulder and cheek.

"Was that good for you, Edward?"

"Holy shit. That was fucking amazing," Edward beamed. "I'm a mess, but I'll take that any day if I get to do that with you."

I giggled and got off the bed. I went to my bag and pulled out a pair of pajamas. In my bag was a small bag with my name on it. I bent down and picked it up. It said that I couldn't open it until Christmas Eve. Next to the tiny bag was a plastic bag from one of the card shops. "Edward, there's two bags in my suitcase. One I'm assuming is my Christmas present. There's another one from a card shop."

"Oh, open that one up," he laughed.

I opened up the bag and found another lion, like the one that was ruined in the dorm break in. I smiled and held it close to my body. "Edward, thank you! I love it."

"Now you have someone to sleep with. I felt horrible when I saw the one I got you when you were sick was ruined so I got you another. I even sprayed him with my cologne," Edward said proudly.

I held the lion up to my face and inhaled. It did smell like Edward's cologne. I smiled and squealed. "You are the best ever, Edward. I love you so much."

"I love you too, beautiful. I do need to hop in the shower, though. I really don't want to sleep in my own spunk. Ew."

"I don't blame you there. I'll call you tomorrow. Sleep well, handsome. I know I will since I have my lion," I giggled.

"I'll try. I just have your t-shirt and pillow. They are poor substitutes for you. However, they'll have to do. Good night, Bella. I love you."

"Good night, Edward. I love you more."

## La Cantante

"Not likely. Talk to you tomorrow."

"Bye."

I pulled on my pajamas and crawled in between my sheets. I turned off the lights and held my lion to my chest, inhaling deeply to his fur. The smell of Edward's cologne calmed me and I fell into a deep sleep.

xx LC xx

The next morning, Emmett and I drove off to Seattle. Emmett helped me put the box of tapes and pictures into the cab of my old red truck. Charlie left a note on the fridge saying that he had a job to complete in Port Angeles. He also apologized for his behavior yesterday, saying it was uncalled for. We would talk some when he got back from his job later this evening.

It took us nearly four and half hours to get to Seattle. My truck was older than dirt and wouldn't go above 60 mph. Jacob used to take care of it for me, but obviously he hasn't done any mechanic work since he's turned into a juvenile delinquent. We pulled up to my friend's video business and unloaded the videos and pictures. Emmett carried in the box and we walked to the rear of the store where I was to meet with Mark. No one was at the desk, but I saw a bell and I rang it.

Mark, a friend of mine from high school, who also used to have a huge crush on me, ambled out of the back room. He was about 5'9" with a bit of pudge. He had dirty blonde hair that was about chin length and greasy. He also wore thick glasses and smelled like burnt pizza and Fritos. Mark was the prime example of a nerd. However, he knew his stuff and would do a good job with this. His pimply face broke into a smile when he saw me. "Yo, Bella. How's it going?" he smiled.

"Good, Mark. You remember my brother, Emmett?" I said, introducing them.

"Yeah. Nice to see you, man," Mark said as he shook Emmett's hand. Emmett smiled. "So, Bellaboo, what's the plan?"

## La Cantante

"Here are the videos and pictures that I mentioned in my email. Also, did you get my email last night with the proposed layout?" I asked.

"Yep, I did. It sounds really good. The songs are really appropriate for this type of memoriam project. You brought a CD with them, right?"

"Yeah, I did. Here's the CDs with the songs and a DVD with the video emails," I said, handing him three jewel cases, each clearly marked.

"So, let me get this straight. You're creating a memoriam set of DVDs for your boyfriend?"

"Yes sir. The videos that you have are of him and his mom. She passed away when he was nine. This should go without saying but please be careful with them. I don't know what I would do if the videos were ruined," I said with a slight grimace.

"Nah. They'll be fine. I should be done with the project by early next week. As discussed, you need to pay half of the cost now and the other half upon pick up. Because you're a friend, I managed a discount. You'll need to pay \$75 today and another \$75 when you pick them up," Mark said with a wink.

"Do you take check?" I asked.

"Yes, we do. Just make it out to Video Remembrances," Mark said.

I wrote out the check and handed it to Mark. He filled out an invoice and handed it to me saying I needed the invoice to pick up the finished product. He also said that he could make as many copies as I wanted of the project, once they were completed. I said I wouldn't mind have an extra set for Carlisle and Esme. He said that would be an additional \$50 and to pay that when I pick up the finished DVD set. Before we left, Mark asked me what photos I wanted to use for the photo collage for the cover. I chose the photos that spanned Edward's life with his mom. Esme also included the Cullen crest and that would be the focal point for DVD cover. Mark said he'd arrange them and we'd be good to go. After an hour, Emmett and I headed to the mall.

## La Cantante

As we drove, I sent Edward a text.

*I just finished your Christmas present - B*

*I'm working on yours as well. I think you'll like it - E*

*You honestly didn't need to get my anything, Edward. I have bling on my left hand. That's enough. - B*

*What did I say about spoiling you? - E*

*That you intend to do it for the rest of our lives? - B*

*Exactly - E*

*Doesn't mean I have to like it - B*

*You'll love your present(s) - E*

*I love you. That's all I need - B*

*Are you quoting The Beatles, woman? - E*

*Sure, Edward - B*

*Hey, I got to go. I'll talk to you later - E*

*Okay. Love you - B*

*Love you much, much, much more - E*

*Dork - B*

*Your dork - E*

*Xoxo - B*

:P - E

"Are you texting loverboy?" Emmett asked.

"Yes. Emmett, I have a question for you."

"Shoot," Emmett said with a grin.

"Do you have a tattoo?" I asked.

"Um, no?" he responded.

"Are you sure?"

"No?"

"Emmett! Do you have a tattoo or not?" I chided.

"Yeah, I have a tattoo. It's on my right ass cheek. All of the football players got one my freshman year when we went to the playoffs. I got my old number on my ass. It hurt like a son of a bitch, but it was a bonding experience. Why? Are you thinking of getting a tattoo?" Emmett asked.

"Actually, I am. Who did you go to?" I asked.

"I went to a local guy near Emerson. However, I have a friend of mine who does tattoos in Port Angeles. What do you want to get?"

"This," I said as we pulled into a parking space. I pulled out the Cullen crest and handed it to Emmett. "I'm eventually going to be a Cullen and this will be my crest as well."

Emmett whistled and arched a brow. "You're really serious about Edward, aren't you?"

## La Cantante

"As a funeral, Emmett. He's it for me. I never felt the way I feel about him with anyone. Not even with Mom or Dad," I said truthfully.

"Damn. Well, if you want to get this tattooed on your body, I know the perfect person. Her name is Irina and she does fantastic work. You remember my friend, Paul from high school? His shoulder tat was done by Irina. She's awesome. Where do you want it?"

"On my hip."

"I'll call her after we finish up with Rosalie's present. Perhaps she can get you in today," Emmett said with a dimply grin.

"Thanks, Emmy. You're the best."

"I know. I am the best older brother in the history of older brothers," he said with a goofy grin.

"That you are," I giggled. "Let's get Rose her necklace."

Emmett nodded and we strolled into the mall. We walked to the jewelry store and were assaulted by several salespeople. Emmet worked with a younger man who was willing to accommodate our needs. Emmett ended up getting the pendant for Rosalie and we headed back out of the mall. Emmett handed me the keys and we drove back toward Forks. Emmett called his tattoo friend and got me an appointment for tomorrow.

On our way back, Emmett and I stopped at the grocery store and picked up some more food. We were almost done with our shopping when we ran into Billy Black, Jacob's father. He saw Emmett before he saw me. He gave Emmett a hearty handshake and smiled at him. I watched from a distance, not wanting to talk to him. Emmett politely ended the conversation and walked back to where I was standing. I waited until Billy had left the store before I allowed myself to breathe. I held my hand to my chest, to calm my erratically beating heart.



"You okay, Isabelly?" Emmett asked.

"No. What did you say to him?" I questioned.

"Not much. He just asked how I was doing and how you were doing. I gave him some vague responses. I then asked if he had heard from Jacob. He told me that Jacob ran off and hasn't been back since October," he said as we walked to check out.

"Oh."

"He also apologized. For Jacob's behavior. He felt so badly. He asked me to tell you that he was sorry and that he wished things had turned out differently," Emmett said as we paid for the food.

"Well, they didn't. Jacob is an asshat and that's that."

"Asshat? Nice vocabulary, Bella," Emmett guffawed.

"Jacob has reduced me to using nonsense words. He's an asshat, fucktard, and a bitch," I said solemnly.

"Bitch is not a nonsense word."

"When describing Jacob Black, it is," I said with a tone of finality. "Are you coming with me while I get my tattoo tomorrow?"

"Yes, Bella. Edward called last night and demanded that I be your personal body guard until he come out on the 26th. He's a bit obsessive, don't you think?"

"No. He's not. I wouldn't admit it to him, but I have a bad feeling that something is going to happen. Jacob is going to show up and do something to me. I just have this feeling in my heart and my bones. It's not going to be anytime soon, but it will happen while we're off," I said with a shudder.

## La Cantante

"Let's hope that feeling doesn't happen," Emmett said with a reassuring hug.

We drove back to home and I cooked dinner for us. Charlie came home as I was dishing up dinner. We all sat down at the table and dug into the beef stroganoff that I prepared. Charlie asked how my meeting with Mark went and if Emmett got Rose her present. We both answered and we fell back into a comfortable silence. We finished our meal and I began clearing the table. Charlie cleared his throat and asked me to sit back down. I slunk back down into my seat and looked at Charlie expectantly.

"What's going on, Dad?" Emmett asked.

"Bella's right. I have lost weight. After I dropped you off at school, Bells, I went to the doctor. I was always tired and just felt 'off.' He ran some preliminary tests and found nothing out of the ordinary in my bloodwork. He then sent me to get some x-rays and an MRI done. There was something troublesome on my x-rays."

"What did the doctor say?" I asked quietly.

"Well, I used to smoke quite heavily when I was younger. I quit after you were born, Bella. Renee had enough of it and honestly so did I. Anyhow, my x-rays showed some stuff in my lungs. I had a biopsy done and I have stage II lung cancer. I've lost weight due to the chemotherapy that I'm on. I've shown remarkable improvement, but I still have a few more chemotherapy treatments before I begin radiation. The good thing is that it didn't metastasize. It's only contained in my lungs, which is a positive. Another good thing is that they caught it relatively early. I'm sorry that I didn't tell you earlier," Charlie mumbled.

"Dad, how are you doing this alone? Someone needs to be with you for your treatments," I cried.

"I'm not alone, Bells. You remember Harry Clearwater, right? Well, he passed away a couple of years ago and I've gotten really close with his widow, Sue. We've been dating for the past year. She's been my rock throughout this whole

ordeal," Charlie explained.

"What's the prognosis, Dad?" Emmett asked.

"Pretty good. Like I said, I'm responding well to the treatment."

"Do you have your medical reports and scans, Dad?" I asked.

"Yeah, why?" Charlie asked.

"Edward's father is an oncologist. I want you to get a second opinion. Please, Daddy?" I with a small smile.

"I have them on a CD or DVD or something. I can give that to you and you can send it off to Edward's dad. I'd like to know his thoughts on this," Charlie said. He pushed away from the table and went into his bedroom. He handed me a disc. I darted up the stairs and grabbed my laptop. I quickly logged into my email program.

*To: Carlisle and Esme Cullen*

*From: Isabella Swan*

*Re: Second Opinion*

*Dear Carlisle and Esme,*

*First off, I want to thank you again for all of your help in assisting Edward and I in moving into our apartment. You are both such a godsend and I'm so appreciative.*

*Secondly, I hope that you and your family have a wonderful Christmas. I miss you all tremendously and wish I could split myself in two so I can be here with my family and there with yours. I love you all so much.*

## La Cantante

*Finally, I'm attaching several files from my father. He just informed me that he was diagnosed with stage II lung cancer earlier this year. I am attaching a copy of his most recent x-rays, biopsy results and test results from his oncologist in Port Angeles, Dr. Stanley Gerandy. My dad said that his prognosis is good, but I want to make sure. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email me or call him at 360-555-3844.*

*Thank you so much. Send my love to Alice and Edward. I look forward to seeing you after the first of the year.*

*Love, Bella*

I sent off the email, carbon copying my father in the response. After I shut down my computer, I got up and gave my father a hug. He wrapped his arms around me and for the second day in a row, I cried.

**A/N: The next few chapters will be in Bella's point of view. Not that Edward isn't important. He is. Very much so, however. All of the action is going to be centered around Bella. Leave some love, please!**

# Pain and Presents

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 46: Pain and Presents

### BPOV

After Charlie shared his news with us, we all worked to clean up the kitchen. We then went into the family room to watch a movie together. Emmett sat on the recliner and I curled up next to Charlie. He held his arms around me and I sniffled as we watched *White Christmas*, a Swan family tradition. When the movie was over, Charlie kissed my forehead and headed to bed. Emmett went off to his room to call Rosalie. I curled up on the couch and flipped idly through the channels on our flat screen. I finally settled on a marathon of Star Trek: Deep Space Nine before I lay down on the couch. My eyes were drifting shut when my phone vibrated on the table. I looked at the caller ID and saw that it was Edward.

"Hey, Edward," I said quietly.

"Bella, I'm so sorry about your dad. My father called me as soon as he got your email. When did you find out?" Edward said sadly.

"He told us today over dinner. Is your dad looking at his files?" I asked.

"Yeah. He told me that he is going to call your dad tomorrow. Is there anything I can do, beautiful?"

"You're doing it, Edward. You're being supportive and attentive. That's all you really can do," I said. "However, in all of this craziness, my dad did tell

## La Cantante

Emmett and I that he's dating someone."

"Really? How did you find that out?" Edward snickered.

"I was giving him shit about not having someone there to help him with his treatments. He told us that he was dating the widow of one his close friends. They've been together for about a year."

"Well, that's good that he has someone. With both of you away at school, it was probably very tough for him. Other than the news your dad shared, how was your day?" Edward asked.

"It was good. I ran my errand and it should be completed next week. Emmett and I got Rose a beautiful necklace. She's going to love it," I said with a smile.

"Anything else happen?"

"Well, when Emmett and I went grocery shopping, Emmett ran into Billy, Jacob's dad," I said, nibbling on my fingernail.

Edward growled over the phone. "Did you talk to him?"

"No. I hid. I was too busy focusing on not passing out to carry on a conversation," I replied. "Billy did say that he hasn't heard from Jacob since October. He ran away. He also apologize for Jacob's behavior."

"At least the fucktard's father has some sense," Edward seethed.

"That's what I called Jacob. Along with asshat and bitch. Emmett teased me about using nonsense words to describe him," I giggled.

"Well, that's what he is."

"We know that, but Emmett found it hysterical. So what did you do today? Was the paint interesting to watch as it dried?" I joked.

## La Cantante

"Ah. I had a change of plans. The paint is scheduled for tomorrow. I ran my own errand today. I was actually out completing my errand when you texted. That's why I needed to leave so abruptly. Sorry about that," Edward said sheepishly.

"That's fine, Edward. I'm happy to talk to you. I wish I was with you, but will settle for talking on the phone," I responded.

"Do you have Skype on your computer?" Edward asked.

"Unfortunately, no. I don't have a webcam. Don't even think about it, Cullen," I admonished.

"Think about what, Swan?"

"I can hear the gears grinding in your head. You are not getting me a webcam," I retorted.

"How did you know I was going to get you a webcam?" Edward squeaked.

"I know you too well, Cullen. Don't. Even. Think. About. It. We can talk on the phone," I said forcefully.

"Party pooper," he replied sullenly.

"We have rent and bills to pay, Edward. You can't just spend your money frivolously," I said with a frown.

"Bella, seriously? I've been nothing but frugal my whole life. I'm not like Alice where I can spend thousands of dollars at the drop of a hat. All my money that I earned from my jobs in high school and over the summer have gone into my checking account. The only splurge I've made was on your ring. Relax, love," he said.

"Okay, Edward. However, I'm not like you when it comes to money. I don't have a trust fund to fall back on. I'm usually very frugal. I mean to the point

## La Cantante

where I don't like to spend any money. However, I've had a windfall with the money from the university because of the damage done to my belongings in the break in," I replied.

"Bella, what's mine is yours. It will be yours, in a matter of a few years. When you become Mrs. Cullen."

"You sound awfully sure of yourself there, champ. What makes you think I'll say yes if you propose?" I teased.

"Bella," Edward warned.

"Kidding. Just kidding. I'd probably say yes now, if you asked. Hell, let's go to Vegas," I offered.

"Really?" Edward said, perking up. "You'd elope?"

"I don't want a huge wedding, Edward. I just want you and me, being legally bound together for the rest of our lives," I answered honestly.

I faintly heard tapping in the background. "Edward, what are you doing?"

"Looking up flights to Vegas," he answered quickly.

"Edward! Slow down! Let's get through school, first," I screeched.

"What? You just said that you would say yes if I proposed and would be willing to go to Vegas," he huffed.

"Okay, I was only saying that because I miss you and I'm lonely. Also, I'm not the most overly romantic girl, but I think I deserve a better proposal than having you assume that I say yes over the phone," I giggled.

"You're right. You deserve hearts and flowers and the whole grand gesture," Edward relented. "Besides, I want to wow you with your engagement ring. Maybe something custom made."



## La Cantante

"Edward. Behave."

"You deserve the best, love," Edward stated simply.

"I have the best: you," I replied. "Enough of the talk of engagement and weddings. Please. I'm getting heart palpitations. I actually do need to head to bed, though. I have an appointment in Port Angeles tomorrow at 11. Emmett is taking me. I need to shower."

"Can I watch?" Edward said suggestively.

"No webcam, remember?"

"I can fix that problem, beautiful," he laughed.

"Perv."

"You know it. I'll talk to you tomorrow. I love you, Bella."

"I love you, too, Edward."

I hung up the phone and turned off the television, feeling a little better after talking to Edward. I climbed the stairs and grabbed some underwear and my pajamas. I popped out my contacts and I took a quick shower, shaving all of my body parts and scrubbing my hair. After I got out of the shower, I blew dry my hair. I forgot how humid it was in Forks and my hair took forever to dry. I crawled into bed, grasping my Edward-lion and fell asleep quickly.

xx LC xx

I woke up at 9 to Emmett pounding on my door. I groaned and pulled the pillow over my head. Emmett eventually stormed into my room and pulled my blankets off the bed. I curled up, instinctively and gave him the evil eye. He stuck out his tongue and scampered out of the room. I got up and made my bed. I grabbed a pair of loose jeans and changed into a thong with strings on the side. I finished my look with a red sweater. I went into the bathroom, brushed

## La Cantante

my teeth and put in my contacts. I also put on some light make up after I pulled my hair into a low ponytail. I grabbed a book from my bookshelf and walked downstairs. I threw in some PopTarts into the toaster and poured myself a glass of milk.

Emmett and I headed out to Port Angeles after we both finished our breakfast. I was very nervous about the tattoo but I wanted to get this for me and for Edward. We drove the hour to Port Angeles and Emmett pulled up to a colorful shop. We walked into the tattoo shop and went up to the counter.

"Hi, I'm Bella Swan and I have an appointment with Irina," I said to the receptionist.

"Yes, hello. I'll get Irina for you," the pierced, tattooed girl replied. She hopped up and she was no taller than Alice and skipped to the back of the shop.

A tall, platinum blonde with pink streaks in her hair strode out of the back office and to the front counter. "Bella?"

"That's me," I said as I shook her hand.

"I'm Irina Stanislovski. What can I do for you?" she said with a smile. She had an eyebrow piercing and a tongue piercing. She was dressed in all black, with pink accents. I was intimidated by her but for some strange reason I felt that I could trust her.

"I want to get a tattoo. I would like to get this," I said as I pulled out the Cullen crest, "And some musical notations added in a cloud-like swirl around the crest."

Irina looked at the crest and took out a piece of paper and quickly sketched a rough etching. "Kind of like this?"

"Yeah. I'd also like to add these letters in the swirl around the crest as well," I said, scribbling down EAMC on the edge of the sketch.

## La Cantante

"Where do you want it?" she asked with a grin.

"On my right hip."

"Okay, let me just trace your hip and I'll come up with a sketch of the tattoo. Give me a half hour and I'll have something for you," she said as she led me to a table. I unbuttoned my jeans and she took out some tracing paper and took an outline of her hip. "How big do you want the tattoo to be?"

"Perhaps a little bigger than picture I gave you," I suggested.

"Perfect. I'm assuming black and grey?"

"Yep. If you can add some white for some highlights, that would be great," I said.

"Of course," she replied kindly. "Let me get started on this. Head back in a half hour and Lily will have some paperwork for you to fill out."

"Great! Thanks," I replied as I hopped off the table and walked toward the exit. Emmett and I walked to a coffee shop around the corner from the tattoo shop and I pulled out my book. Emmett was in line to get some coffee. He plopped down after he picked up his coffee.

"When you're getting your tattoo, I'm probably going to run some errands for dad. I need to get his Christmas present and some other stuff for him," Emmett said as he sipped his coffee.

"Sounds good. Jacob will not probably take me while I'm on the table in a tattoo shop," I giggled.

"Text me when you're done. It should be a couple of hours," Emmett stated.

"Oh goody," I replied sarcastically.

## La Cantante

Emmett chuckled and shook his head. I turned back to my book and waited for the half hour to pass. I took out my phone and sent Alice a text.

*Alice, I'm fucking crazy. - B*

*LOL We know this, Bell - A*

*I'm getting a tattoo - B*

*Damn girl. Of what? - A*

*The Cullen crest, some musical symbols and Edward's initials. - B*

*DAMN GIRL! - A*

*Is this a wrong decision? - B*

*Hell, no! - A*

*Are you getting any 'feelings?' - B*

*Only positive, happy ones, Bella. - A*

*That's what I needed to hear. However, don't tell Edward. It's a surprise.  
Thanks, Alice - B*

*No prob. Sorry about your dad. Edward told me - A*

*Any 'feelings' about that? - B*

*He'll be fine. - A*

*Phew! Wish me luck, Ali - B*

*No luck needed. Love you, Bella - A*

*Love you too - B*

I put my phone into my pocket and headed back to the tattoo parlor with Emmett. When I walked back in, Lily, the receptionist, handed me a stack of papers. Lily made a copy of my driver's license and put in with my file. I filled them out and passed them back to her. She gave me a smile and I sat back down in the benches near the entrance. Irina came back out and greeted me with a handshake.

She put down a sheet of tracing paper and showed me the sketch of my tattoo. It was exactly as I envisioned. The oval shaped crest was about four inches high and was the dominant feature. There were swirls with different music symbols. In small letters, under the crest, was Edward's initials. "It'll look better with the shading and detail work. Do you like it?"

I nodded. Irina gave me a high five and she pulled out a stencil. I lay down on the table and unbuttoned my jeans. Emmett came back with me and held my hand. Irina positioned the stencil on my hip and rubbed it on my skin. "Let's check the positioning, okay?"

I got up and walked to the mirror near the back of the shop. I looked at my reflection and critically looked at the position of the stencil. I liked it where it was. "Awesome. Let's do this before I lose my nerve," I giggled.

"You got it. Come on," Irina said, as she guided me back to the table. I lay back down and she readied her supplies. She eventually got her tattoo gun prepared and she started it. "You ready?"

I nodded and she pressed the gun to my skin. I felt some pain and I gripped Emmett's hand. He gave me a smile and squeezed my hand in return. "You're doing good, Isabelly."

"Can you stay until she finishes the outline of the crest?" I asked.

"Definitely," Emmett replied.

## La Cantante

"Is Emmett your boyfriend?" Irina asked.

"Oh, no. Emmett's my brother," I explained.

"So, why did you want to get this tattoo?" Irina asked as she worked.

"The crest is my boyfriend's family crest. The music notes is my passion and the connection that my boyfriend and I have to each other. The letters are my boyfriend's initials," I explained to Irina.

"This is a cool crest. I like the combination of the symbols. What's your boyfriend's name?"

"Edward. Edward Anthony Masen Cullen," I answered with a wistful smile.

"Do you have a picture?" Irina asked.

"Em, can you grab my phone from my jacket?" I asked. Emmett got up and grabbed my phone. He handed it to me and I scrolled through the pictures. I found a picture of Edward and held it up for Irina to see.

"He's very, very handsome, Bella. You're a very lucky girl," she gushed.

"Yes, I am. He's absolutely wonderful. My soul mate," I breathed.

"We're done with the outline, Bella. You did great," Irina said proudly.

"Em, you can go if you want. I'll be fine," I said.

"Okay, Isabelly. I'll be back in an hour or two. Call me if you're done before then," he said as he kissed my forehead.

"Got it, Em. Thanks!"

Emmett got up from his chair and strode out of the shop. Irina continued to chat and work on my tattoo. She told me about her partner, Harli and how they

met. She also told me about an abusive ex-boyfriend and how she got away. I told her my story about Jacob and the drama I was currently dealing with. She gave me suggestions on how to handle the pressure. Her advice was invaluable. However, she said that being happy is the most important. Don't let the drama of your life overshadow your happiness. Life's too short to dwell on the negative.

About three and half hours later, my tattoo was complete and she was wiping off the extra ink. "You ready to see the finished product?"

"Yep." I stood up and walked to the mirror. I held down my jeans and looked at the artwork permanently etched in my skin. "Oh my goodness. This is absolutely gorgeous. Exactly what I pictured in my head. Irina, thank you," I gushed.

"You're welcome, Bella. Let's get you all taped up and I'll give you the aftercare instructions," Irina said. I lay back down and she taped up my tattoo. Irina gave me some lotion to put on beginning on tomorrow. She also asked me to stop by before I headed out back to Emerson to see how it was healing. I pulled my jeans back up and buttoned them. We walked up to the counter and I paid for my tattoo. Emmett was sitting in the benches in the front. I turned and we headed out to the truck, driving back to Forks.

xx LC xx

Okay, getting a tattoo was a stupid idea. I was fine on the drive home. I was fine through dinner. However, when I went to bed, my hip started hurting like a mother. I took a few ibuprofen and tried to get some sleep. I couldn't get comfortable and barely slept a few hours. Suffice it to say, I was not pleasant to be around for the next few days.

On Christmas Eve eve, Emmett and I drove back out to Seattle to pick up Edward's present. We took Charlie's Malibu to make better time. We were actually supposed to get snow and Charlie didn't want us on the road in the snowstorm in the rust bucket. We parked in front of Video Rembrances and walked to the rear of the store. I rang the bell and Mark walked out with the

## La Cantante

box of videos and two smaller boxes of DVDs.

"Hey Bellaboo. Emmett. You're all done," Mark said with an impish grin.

"Fantastic. So, I owe you \$125, right?" I asked.

"Nope. Just \$75. Consider the extra set a Christmas present, Bella," Mark said, as he 'eye-fucked' me.

"Thanks, Mark. I appreciate it," I said, shrinking back toward Emmett.

"Bella, if things don't work out with Edward, call me, okay?" Mark said as he licked his lips.

"Um, I'm very happy with my Edward. However, I'll keep that in mind, Mark," I said uncomfortably. I wrote the check for the rest of the cost of the videos. I handed it, along with the original invoice, over to Mark. Emmett picked up the box of videos and I grabbed the two smaller boxes of DVDs. "Have a Merry Christmas, Mark."

"You too, Bella. See you soon. Don't be a stranger," Mark said dejectedly.

Emmett and I exited the store and loaded the videos into the trunk of Charlie's car. We sped back toward Forks and picked up groceries for Christmas.

Our Christmas Eve was going to be uneventful. Charlie had to work and so it gave Emmett and I wrap our presents and call our significant others. Edward and I spent every night on the phone for hours. Christmas Eve was no different. He stayed at the apartment until Christmas Eve. He drove to his parents' home during the afternoon. We promised that we would open each other's present that was left for the other while we were on the phone together.

I was up in my room, with the little gift bag sitting on my bed. "Okay, Edward. Are you ready to open your Christmas present?" I asked. I was excited for his watch, but I couldn't wait for him to get his real present.



## La Cantante

"Yes, I am, beautiful girl. Are you?" Edward countered.

"Oh, yes. This bag has been taunting me for a week. However, I want you to go first," I suggested.

"You don't have to tell me twice," he said excitedly. I heard him rip into the present. I heard the creak of the box and he gasped. "Bella! Thank you. It's perfect."

"You like it?" I asked nervously.

"I love it. It's too much, but I love it," he replied.

"Read the inscription," I said. I had gotten the back inscribed when I purchased the watch.

"*Il mio amore. La mia vita. Mio tutto. Il mio cantante,*" Edward read reverently. "If my translation is correct, 'my love, my life, my everything, my singer?'"

"Yep. Not bad for an Irish dude," I teased.

"Ha, ha, silly. My mom may have been Irish, but she had an Italian heart," he retorted. "It fits perfectly, Bella. Thank you, love. I don't deserve you."

"You deserve me. Can I open my present now?" I asked, bouncing on the bed.

"Of course, beautiful girl."

I pulled out the tissue paper of the bag and threw it on the floor. I reached into the bag and pulled out a small box. I opened the box and it was my turn to gasp. "Edward, they're beautiful. They match my ring."

"They should. It's part of a set," Edward laughed. "I know you had a pair of sapphire earrings, but these were perfect for you. So delicate, but with a strength about them."

## La Cantante

"The earrings that are 'sapphire' that you saw are cubic zirconium. They only pretend to be sapphire. These are absolutely gorgeous. Now it's my turn to say that they are too much," I admonished.

"No, they're not. I'd rather have bought you diamonds. Well, one huge diamond, in the form of an engagement ring, but that'll come later, love," Edward laughed. "So you really like them?"

"I love them. Thank you," I said sincerely. "So, what are your plans for Christmas tomorrow?"

"We're going to church. Then, opening presents and gorging ourselves on massive amounts of delicious food that my mom is cooking," Edward said.

"What's Esme preparing?"

"She's making prime rib with mashed potatoes, asparagus and béarnaise sauce. How about you?"

"We're opening presents. We're not really 'church' people. My mom tried it for a little bit but like everything else she's tried, it didn't stick. I'm cooking dinner. I'm also making prime rib. However, we're having baked potatoes and broccoli casserole. Will I hear from you tomorrow?"

"Of course, love. I couldn't imagine not talking to you on Christmas," Edward chided.

"Okay, cool. I just didn't want to assume," I said quietly.

"As I've said before, if I could be there, I would. I miss you so much, Bella. I'll be so happy when I see you in two days," Edward said. I could hear him smile through the phone.

"Two days. Thank God. I miss you too, Edward. I love you," I sniffled.

## La Cantante

"We're in the homestretch, beautiful. Anyhow, I have to go. We're heading to 9 o'clock mass. It's after midnight. I love you. Very much. Two days, beautiful," Edward said quietly.

"Two days. We can do it. I love you more."

Edward and I hung up and I put on my earrings. As I sat in my bed, I held my lion. I knew that Edward and I couldn't be separated for this long. I made a vow and said a prayer that we wouldn't be in the future. I eventually fell into a deep sleep, dreaming of my love and of our upcoming reunion. It couldn't come fast enough.

**A/N: Christmas, reunion and duh...duh...duh...drama!**

# A Swan Family Christmas

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*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 47: A Swan Family Christmas

### BPOV

I woke up early on Christmas day. I wanted to surprise Emmett and Charlie with a breakfast feast. I padded down the stairs and quietly moved through the kitchen. I grabbed eggs, bacon, cheese, hash browns and some bread. I scrambled the eggs and pulled out a huge frying pan. I placed the bacon into the pan and let it cook. I also grabbed some breakfast sausages from the bag of the fridge and put them in the pan as well. As the breakfast meat was cooking, I sent a text to Edward.

*Merry Christmas, handsome. I wasn't sure if you were available, but I wanted wish you and your family a Merry Christmas. I miss you - B*

I put the phone on the kitchen counter when Edward didn't respond right away. He would text when he was available. As the bacon and sausage finished cooking, I put it on a plate with some paper towels on top to absorb the grease. I heard some footsteps above me and I knew that one of the boys was up. I flipped on the coffee maker and put the scrambled eggs into the frying pan. As I did so, my phone beeped.

*I'm committing a cardinal sin, texting in church, beautiful girl. If I go to hell, it'll be your fault. I miss you so much more. Merry Christmas - E*

*If you're going to hell, then I'll be there with you. We'll be in good company - B*

## La Cantante

Charlie came into the kitchen and he kissed my head. "Morning, Bells. Merry Christmas."

"Good morning, Dad. Merry Christmas to you too," I said giving him a hug.

"Tell Edward 'Merry Christmas' for me," Charlie said with a grin.

*Edward, my dad says Merry Christmas - B*

*Merry Christmas, Charlie! - E*

"Edward returns the sentiment, Dad," I chuckled. I held up the phone and showed him the text, along with the Christmas Tree icon he sent along with the text.

Charlie chuckled and shook his head. He made himself a cup of coffee and sat down at the kitchen table. He pilfered a piece of bacon as he was walking past the plate. I swatted his hands away before he could get more. I added the cheese to the eggs and plated up some for Charlie and me. Emmett would have to suffer through a cold breakfast if he didn't get down here soon enough. Charlie and I ate our breakfast in silence, save for the holiday music I had playing on my iPod. As we were almost finished, Emmett lumbered down the stairs and helped himself to breakfast. I told him that he was responsible for doing the dishes. He complained, but Charlie said that the last person up had dish duty for the entire day. Emmett rolled his eyes and began working on the pots and pans from breakfast. I settled onto the couch and texted Edward again.

*Call me when you're home, handsome. - B*

As soon as I pressed send, my phone rang. "Hello?"

"You said for me to call you when I got home. We just walked in the door," Edward chuckled.

"Dork."

## La Cantante

"Don't you know it. Hold on, Alice wants to talk to you. I think. She's bouncing and squeaking. I don't speak pixie so..." Edward said. I heard them scuffle and Edward barked 'OW!'

"Merry Christmas, Bella! I miss you so much, girlie," Alice squealed.

"What did you do to Edward, Alice?" I chided.

"I pinched his ass when he held the phone above my head," she giggled.

"It fucking hurt, Alice. Damn it!" Edward yelled in the background.

"Oh good lord, you two are just too much," I laughed. "Merry Christmas, Alice. Has Santa been good to you this year?"

"I don't know yet. We opened up one present yesterday before dinner. The rest of the presents are being opened up after dinner tonight," Alice said.

"I hope you like what I got you, Ali," I said with a smirk. When I went shopping with Jasper, I ended up getting Alice a present. Edward told me he would bring it to his house for Christmas. I got her some really nice oil pastels and portfolio for her fashion designs. She also received a coupon for a manicure and pedicure. I also got Esme and Carlisle presents as well. They both received a gift certificate to a local spa for a couples' massage and pampering.

"I'm certain I will love it, Bell. Edward is bringing your present with him when he flies out tomorrow," Alice grinned. "So, how's 'you know?'"

"Huh?" I asked.

"The thing you texted me about a week or so ago?" Alice pressed.

"Oh! Right! It's healing up nicely. I can't wait for Edward to see it," I gushed, bouncing on the couch.

## La Cantante

"Okay, Edward is about ready to take my head off. I've been monopolizing your time. I'll see you when you fly out after the first of the year. I love you, Bella!" Alice chimed.

"I love you, too, Ali. Merry Christmas," I replied.

"Merry Christmas. Here's the Grinch," Alice giggled.

I laughed and I faintly heard Edward growl at his sister. "She's so annoying," Edward grumbled.

"You love her. Admit it," I sniggered.

"I suppose I do. I love you more, though," Edward breathed.

"I would hope so, since I'm your girlfriend and all. It would be a little weird if you loved your sister like you loved me. Incest is definitely not best," I teased.

"I'm speechless, Bella," Edward scoffed.

"Sorry, Edward. I have no filter today," I replied sheepishly. "How was church?"

"I wasn't really paying attention. I was playing a game on my phone and some insanely beautiful girl kept texting me," he laughed.

"So, about tomorrow," I began.

"What about tomorrow?" Edward asked.

"I need flight times so I know when I need to pick you up from SeaTac?" I finished.

"I thought I sent that to you earlier this week. No big deal. Do you have a pen and some paper handy?" Edward asked.

"Yep. Shoot," I giggled.

"I'm on Delta Airlines Flight 912, departing from Buffalo at 7:15 AM. I should arrive at SeaTac by Noon, local time," Edward explained.

I hopped onto my computer and pulled up my email. Edward had sent his itinerary. I was just an idiot and didn't write down the information. "Okay, I got it all, Edward. I'll be parking the car and waiting for you at the baggage claim."

"Is Emmett coming with you?" Edward asked.

"Um, no. I honestly don't know if I can keep my hands off of you when I see you and I don't think that Emmett wants to see that," I answered honestly.

"Bella," Edward warned.

"Honestly Edward, I am thinking that once we're halfway between Seattle and Forks, I'm pulling off into a campground and jumping your bones," I said.

"Again. Speechless," Edward squeaked.

"What can I say? I'm talented," I laughed.

"I can also understand where you're coming from, Bella. I'll probably be feeling the same way when I see you," Edward purred. "I miss the sounds you make when you come. I miss your body and its reaction to my caresses. I miss your beautiful face, gorgeous hair, soft lips and deep brown eyes. I miss everything about you. Shit, I'm getting hard just thinking about what I want to do to you."

"I'm getting wet, too, Edward. I can't wait to see you," I said quietly.

"I love you, Bella. So much. My heart aches for you," Edward responded.

"We can never be apart this long ever again," I replied. "I love you immensely."



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"I agree, Bella," Edward mumbled. Over the line, I heard some shuffling and muffled words. "I've got to go, beautiful. Alice is getting antsy to open some presents. Impatient little sprite."

"Go have fun with your family. I love you, baby," I said.

"I love you more, beautiful. I'll talk to you later," Edward said. "But, I'll see you tomorrow."

"See you tomorrow, Edward." I hung up the phone and went up to my room to get ready. I put on a pair of black leggings and the purple sweater dress that I wore for Thanksgiving. After I changed, I went into the kitchen and began preparing the meal for dinner. I wasn't going to cook it, per se, but at least get everything ready. After I finished the preparations for dinner, I sat down on the couch and watched *A Christmas Story*. I got lost in the antics of Little Ralphie and his wish of a Red Rider BB Gun. Emmett plopped down next to me and we watched the movie together.

When the movie was finished, Charlie came down and began distributing our Christmas presents. At least one of them, we would open the rest after our meal. I got one of my presents for Charlie and gave it to him. Emmett tore into his present first. Charlie had gotten him a book that he wanted. It was about the most bizarre professional sports injuries, complete with pictures in full color. Emmett was flipping through the book with rapt attention. I was scrunching my nose at some of the pictures and I moved away. I opened my present next. Charlie had gotten me an engraved pitch pipe. I chuckled as I didn't really need it, with my freakish ability of perfect pitch. However, I thanked him for the thought. Charlie opened up his present last. I got him a sweatshirt from the bookstore, proclaiming him as an "Emerson Dad." It was charcoal grey with navy blue stitching and white accents.

I went into the kitchen after our mini gift exchange and began preheating the oven for dinner. As soon as the oven was heated, I put the meat and the potatoes into the stove. I set the timer and began preparing the salad. Emmett and Charlie were watching a football game in the family room. I danced around the kitchen and made our Christmas meal. A couple of hours later, I had

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completed the meal and set it out in our small kitchen. I called Charlie and Emmett into the kitchen and we dug into our meals. They enjoyed what I had cooked for them. After we finished our meal, Emmett cleared the plates and began washing them. The house phone was ringing as we were heading into the family room. Charlie picked up the phone.

"Hello?" he asked gruffly. "Bella, it's your mom. She wants to wish you and Emmett a Merry Christmas. Since Emmett is on dish detail, you're up first."

"Hi, Mom. Merry Christmas," I said cheerfully.

"Merry Christmas, baby! How was dinner?" she asked.

"It was good. I cooked it so it had to be," I laughed.

"You were always such a good cook, sweetheart. So, when are you going to see Edward?" Renee asked.

"He's flying out tomorrow. I'm picking him up at the airport in the afternoon," I said.

"Are you excited to see him?" Renee questioned.

"Mom, really? I've been miserable without him. I can't wait to see him. I can't wait until I can give him his present. He's going to flip out," I breathed.

"What did you get him, Bella?"

"I got him two presents. The first one he opened last night while we were on the phone. It was a watch that I got engraved for him. His watch that he wore was falling apart. He loved it. However, the main present that I got him is I had all of his videos from when his mom was alive compiled into a set of DVDs, intermixed with baby pictures and music," I explained.

"Oh, Bella. He's going to love it," Renee gushed.

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"I hope so. I also got him a surprise, but he'll see that later," I said cryptically.

"What's the surprise, Bella?"

"Crap. I got a tattoo with his family's crest on my right hip," I said as I nibbled my fingers. Charlie grunted and gave me a death stare.

"Wow, Bells. You're really serious about this guy," she said.

"Very much so, Mom. I love him," I said sincerely.

"As long as you're happy, Bella. That's all I ask for," Renee smiled. "Is Emmett done with the dishes?"

"Yep. Here he is," I said handing Emmett the phone. I began to scurry out of the kitchen when I was cornered by Charlie.

"A tattoo, Bells?" Charlie said roughly.

"Yes, Dad. I'm nineteen. I can get a tattoo," I said petulantly.

"I just don't like the idea of you 'branding' yourself," Charlie grumbled.

"Emmett has one on his ass," I countered.

"That's different," Charlie argued.

"No, it's not. He got his football number. He got 'branded.'"

"Fine. It's not like I'm going to make you get it removed. You are a grown woman. However, what happens when you and Edward break up?" Charlie asked.

"It's simple. We're not going to break up. See the ring on my left hand? It's Edward's promise that he will propose," I retorted.

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"You're so stubborn, Isabella. So much like your mother," he said, rolling his eyes.

"Oh, no, Dad. I'm like you in my stubbornness," I giggled.

"Whatever, Bella. Go distribute the rest of the presents," he said, fighting back his own laughter.

I went into the family room and distributed the few presents that were left under the tree. Emmett and Charlie headed into the family room when they were done with the dishes. Charlie sat in his recliner, Emmett was on the couch and I was on the floor. "Dad, you go first. Your present is from both Emmett and I."

Charlie tore into the large present by his seat. Emmett and I chipped in a got him a sonar tracking system for when he went fishing. His usually stoic face broke into a huge smile when he realized what he got. "Wow. Thank you so much, you two. This is fantastic!"

Charlie had two smaller presents which he opened after his tracking system. They were both from Edward. He got him a new tackle vest and tackle box, filled with all of the latest tackle lures. "Bella, tell Edward thank you when you see him. This is great."

"You can tell him when you see him tomorrow," I said with a huge smile.

"I shouldn't have to say this, but no funny business in my house, Isabella," Charlie warned.

"I already told Edward he was sleeping on the sofa. Relax, Dad," I laughed. "Emmett, you go next."

Emmett unwrapped the present I got him. I got him a set of drum sticks that were really good. His sticks were falling apart and he didn't have a set of brushes. I also included a picture of the newest part of his drum set that I purchased. It was in the storage facility where we kept our equipment. I got

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him two tom toms. "Isabelly, this rocks! I needed to sticks and I've never used brushes."

"There's more in the box, Em," I teased. He searched in the box and pulled out the picture of his newest drums.

"You are fucking shizz, Bella! Thank you!"

"You're welcome, Emmett."

Emmett opened up an envelope from Charlie. He had given him a check in addition to the book that he received earlier. Emmett gave Charlie a hug and he settled back into his seat. The one box that I had was oddly shaped. I unwrapped it carefully and saw that it was a new acoustic guitar. My old one was ruined when Jacob broke into our dorm room. I gasped when I saw that it was a Fender. "It's from both Dad and I. We wanted to replace the one that you lost. Dad wanted you to get a good one, so we pooled our resources and got you the best. I have the hard case for it in my room. Do you like it, Isabelly?"

"I love it. Thank you so much. This is amazing," I said as I pulled the guitar out of the box and began tuning it. I ran my fingers over the strings and strummed a few songs. It had such a nice tone and was easy to play. I looked at the bottom of the guitar and saw that it was an electric acoustic. I squealed and put the guitar down, hugging my brother and dad. Charlie handed me an envelope after I hugged him. I opened it warily, know how much the guitar cost. He didn't need to get me anymore. He also gave me a card with a check. I kissed him on the cheek and smiled.

Charlie opened up his tracking system and began reading the Bible, er, manual. Emmett took out a practice pad and began fiddling with his new drum sticks. I went into the kitchen and put some coffee on and cut the Bella brownies for dessert. I dished out the brownies and poured each of us a cup of coffee. I carried the dessert and coffee to both Emmett and Charlie. We had our dessert and we all retired to our respective rooms. It was pretty late and I needed to get up early to drive to Seattle to get Edward. I sent Edward a text saying I was heading to bed. I assumed he was already asleep as he had to get up pretty early

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the next morning. Emmett dropped off the case for my guitar in my room and I placed my instrument in the case. I set it by my closet and I changed for bed. Before my eyes drooped, my phone chirped.

*Less than twelve hours, beautiful. I miss you and I love you - E*

*I'm counting the minutes. I can't wait. I love you more - B*

xx LC xx

I woke up the next morning. It was sunny and cheery. I had planned on leaving for SeaTac at nine. My alarm was set for eight. I padded to the bathroom and took a shower, taking extra care to groom myself. I shaved all parts of my body, scrubbed my body with my freesia scented body wash and washed my hair with my strawberry scented shampoo. I got out of the shower and popped in my contacts. I slipped on my underwear, a Wedgewood blue colored bra and panty set that left little to the imagination. I lightly ran my fingers over my tattoo and smiled. It had healed very well. It was very dark in comparison to the paleness of my skin. However, it looked like belonged there.

I stopped staring at my tattoo and turned my attention to my hair. I ran some mousse into my long chestnut locks. I took out my blow dryer and affixed the diffuser on the end of it. I sat on the floor and curled my hair with the diffuser. After I dried my hair, I put on a pair of dark wash jeans and put on some make up. I put some light foundation on, adding blush to my cheeks. I put some light eye shadow and mascara. I finished my look with some light pink lip gloss. I grabbed my tight grey sweater that actually enhanced my cleavage and slipped it over my head. I made sure I had my new earrings on and my ring was on my left ring finger. I sprayed some perfume and I darted to my room. I put on a pair of black ballet flats. I finished my look with a chunky necklace that Alice gave me. It settled between my breasts and I headed out of my room.

I bounded down the stairs and found a note on the fridge.

*Bella, I'm letting you use my car today. I don't want you driving to Seattle in the rust bucket. Emmett and I took it out on a job. Drive safe and we'll see you*

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*when you get back from the airport.*

*Love you, Dad.*

I smiled and tossed the note into the garbage. I popped some Pop Tarts into the toaster and poured myself some milk. I scarfed my food and looked at the clock. I needed to get a move on if I wanted to get there on time. I checked the itinerary that Edward had sent me. I double checked that he left on time from Buffalo and he did. I picked up my dad's keys, my purse, and phone and skipped out to the car. I set up my iPod in the auxiliary port so I could listen to some tunes as I drove to Seattle.

I needed to stop at the bank so I could get cash for the parking garage. I slipped through the drive through and cashed the check that my dad gave me for Christmas. I put the cash into my wallet and I headed out to US 101 to Seattle. I could feel the butterflies in my stomach. I was so excited to see my love. I wish I could fast forward time so I could already be in his arms, kissing his handsome face, holding him close to me. I could not stop smiling as I flew down the highway.

Three and half hours later, I pulled into the parking garage and I nearly sprinted to the baggage claim. I checked the tote board to see if Edward's flight was still on time. I looked up and saw that he had just landed and his luggage was going to be at carousel five. I sat down on a bench and my leg bounced as I waited for him. I was getting impatient as the minutes passed. I was nibbling my finger and was furtively watching for the arriving passengers. My phone beeped and it was a text from Edward.

*I'm heading to baggage claim, beautiful - E*

I squealed and stood up. I was pacing in front of my bench, watching for the familiar bronze head of hair. A few minutes later, I sat back down, but couldn't stay still. I stood back up and started pacing again. I know I looked quite humorous.

"Bella!"

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I turned and looked. There he was, in all his glory. My face broke into two as I smiled and broke into a dead sprint toward him. He put down his carry on and his arms opened up. I ran into his arms, wrapping my arms and legs around his body. I covered his face with kisses, tears falling down my face. "You're here. You're really here. I love you. Oh my God, you're here," I cooed. Edward put me down and he cupped my face, staring intently into my eyes. He leaned down and he kissed me forcefully, his tongue plunging into my throat. I pulled his body close to mine, getting him as near to me as he could without being obscene. His hands gripped my fleece and he held me tightly.

"I'm here, beautiful. I'm never, ever going to be away from you like that ever again. As long as I live. I love you, Bella," he said as he rested his forehead against mine. "I'm here and you're in my arms. Life can't get any more perfect."

I reluctantly pulled away, "Let's get your bags and we'll head to Forks," I breathed. "With a slight detour."

Edward's eyes darkened and he wrapped his arms around my waist, thrusting his hips against mine. I could feel his arousal. "I can't wait, Bella. We'll live out our car fantasy."

I dragged Edward to the baggage carousel and we waited for his suitcase. He spotted it and lugged it off the carousel. We walked hand in hand to the parking garage. We got to my dad's Malibu and I popped the trunk. Edward put his bag into the trunk and put his carry on in the back seat. He settled into the passenger seat and I got into the driver's seat. I backed out of the parking spot and headed back to Forks. Edward and I held hands the entire time that we were in the car. I had figured out a spot about halfway between Seattle and Forks that we could stop and reconnect. We were getting close to the exit and I was getting antsy.

When the exit approached, I eased off the highway and drove to a campground that was open all year round. I eased into a hidden spot in the woods. I turned off the car and got out of the driver's seat. Edward quickly caught on and met me in the backseat. He moved his carry on to the front seat and he pounced. His soft lips were on mine, moving with my lips. My hands weaved into his



thick, coppery hair. "Oh, Bella. I've missed you so much," he breathed into my neck, nibbling along my collarbones.

"I've missed you too, Edward. I've felt like half of a person since we've been apart," I moaned. "I need you."

Edward pulled away and looked into my eyes. He unzipped his leather jacket and eased it off his shoulders. I took off my fleece, to reveal my sweater. Edward's eyes darkened and his hands pulled me to his body. I straddled his lap and moved my hips against his erection. He slipped off my sweater and I unbuttoned his shirt. I pulled away and looked into his eyes. My own eyes traveled down his body. I gasped when I noticed something over his heart.

"What's this, Edward?" I asked.

Edward looked down and gave me a crooked smirk. "Do you like it?" I fingered the new tattoo over his heart. It was an abstract looking swan.

"I love it, Edward," I said as tears filled my eyes. "Was this your 'errand?'"

"Yep. It didn't hurt nearly as much as the one on my hip, but it means so much more," Edward said as he kissed my neck, weaving his fingers through my hair. I moaned and swiveled my hips over Edward's legs.

"Edward," I moaned.

"What beautiful?" he purred.

"I need you. I need to feel you," I breathed. I reached down for his belt buckle and loosened it. He did the same to my jeans. I slipped off my shoes and got off his lap. I wriggled my body out of my jeans and I was just in my bra and panties. You could just see the top edge of my tattoo over the panties. Edward slipped his jeans down his long legs after he toed off his Chucks. He leaned me down and was laying over me. He kissed my lips tenderly, rubbing his mouth over mine. He reached behind me and unclasped my bra, springing my breasts free. He tossed it onto the floor of the car. He kissed down my neck and took of

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my breasts into his mouth, flicking the nipple with his tongue. I arched my back and gasped. I felt Edward smile against my skin. My fingers took purchase in Edward's hair, tugging on the silken strands. He kissed down my body and pulled my panties off. Edward pulled away and it was turn to gasp.

"Holy crow, Bella," he breathed. He ran his fingers over my tattoo. "When did you get this done?"

"The day after I ran my errand," I said cryptically. "You're right. Getting one on the hip does hurt like a mother. However, that's where I wanted it. Only you can see it. Do you know what it is?"

"It's the Cullen Crest, isn't it?" he said, his eyes looking into mine reverently.

I nodded. "I also added in the clouds some musical symbols for our love and connection of music. Also, look at the bottom of the crest."

Edward looked down and he pressed a kiss to the tattoo. He then looked and his face broke into a smile. "Are those my initials?"

"Yeah. I didn't want to put your name, but I figured your initials would look just right," I said, as I blushed.

"Bella," he croaked. His eyes closed and he took a few deep breaths. He looked back up at me and his eyes glistened with tears. He moved back up my body and kissed me passionately, his tongue thrusting into my mouth. I pushed down his boxers and nudged him back onto the seat of the car. I straddled his lap, his erection trapped between us. "I love you so much, Bella. You are truly my soul mate. My other half."

"I need to feel my other half. You've been absent too long, Edward. I want you," I breathed as I kissed his neck, nibbling on his ear lobe. He put his hands on my hips and positioned himself at my entrance. I slowly lowered my body onto his cock, breathing raggedly.

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"Shit, baby. You feel so good. I don't think I'll last long," Edward said as he looked into my eyes. I rocked my body over his and I felt complete with him inside of me. My head fell back and I moved my hips faster. Edward bucked his hips underneath me and moved his hand to my clit. He circled his long fingers against my sensitive nub and I could feel my body get closer to a release.

"Edward, I love you. I need to feel you come. Please baby," I begged. I swiveled my hips and Edward moved with me. He leaned forward and pulled one of my breasts into his mouth, suckling on the nipple. I felt him get harder in my body and his movements became more erratic.

"Bella. God...I'm..." Edward breathed. He tensed and I felt him spill into me. My muscles clenched around him, milking his release for all that it was worth. I pulled Edward's face to mine and kissed him fervently. He wrapped his arms around my waist holding me close to his body. "Shit. That was intense, Bella."

"You're telling me. I love you, baby."

"I love you so much more, Bella. So much more," he whispered, resting his forehead against mine. "I don't want to move, but I'm getting cold."

"Me too, Edward," I giggled. I extricated myself from Edward's strong grasp and we quickly got dressed. I reached into the center console and sprayed some air freshener. I didn't want my dad knowing that I had sex in his car. Edward arched a brow and I shrugged. "I don't want my dad suspecting anything."

"This is your dad's car?" Edward squeaked.

"Yeah. He didn't want me driving my rust bucket to pick you up. It doesn't go above 60 mph and it sounds like it's on its last legs. It's probably going to go to the truck stop in the sky soon," I explained.

"We just had sex in your dad's car. Your dad. The one with a gun," Edward said, panic written over his face.

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"Edward, relax. We'll drive with the windows open and I'll spray the air freshener again before we get to Forks. You're going to go prematurely gray," I teased.

"Okay," he said as he pulled his jacket around his shoulders. "I'll try. I'm not bulletproof or anything, Bella. If he pulls a gun on me..."

"He probably will, but he won't hurt you. He did it with Jacob too. He's just trying to show his 'strength.'"

"Right. Let's head to Forks," Edward said warily.

We got out of the car and drove back to my hometown. We did keep the windows open until my lips turned blue. We were back in Forks by nightfall. I pulled into my driveway and saw that the rust bucket was there. Dad and Emmett were home. I hopped out of the car and grabbed Edward's carry on. He took his suitcase out of the trunk and we walked up the front steps. I unlocked the door and we walked into the family room.

"We're back," I called.

"Hey Bella! Hey Edward!" Emmett boomed. "How was the drive?"

"It was great, Emmett," I said. I quirked a brow and Emmett laughed. He knew what we did in the car and he better not say a damn thing. "Is Dad around?"

"He's in the kitchen, attempting to cook," Emmett snorted.

"Thanks. Come on, Edward," I said with a reassuring grin. I laced my fingers with his and we walked to the kitchen. Charlie was cursing and burning something. "Dad?"

"What? Oh, sorry, Bells. I'm just killing dinner," Charlie grumbled.

"Dad, this is Edward Cullen. Edward, this is my father, Charlie Swan," I introduced. Edward stepped forward and held out his hand. Charlie looked

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Edward over before shaking his hand, squeezing tightly. As they were making their tentative introductions, I looked at my dad's attempt at cooking. "Dad, it helps if you actually stir the pasta," I giggled as I looked at the spaghetti lump in the pot. "I'm going to run out and pick up a chicken from the store. I'll be back. You boys get acquainted. Emmett can moderate."

I turned on my heel and I felt Edward dart behind me. "Bella," he hissed. "Don't leave me here alone."

"Emmett will be here. Relax, baby. You'll do fine. You managed to dazzle my dad over the phone. Just schmooze him in person. I will not serve a pasta blob for dinner. I'll be back in fifteen minutes, thirty minutes tops," I said as I gave him a kiss. "Love you."

"Love you, too. Hurry back. Please," Edward begged, clasping his hands together like he was praying.

"Have fun." I grabbed my dad's keys and headed back into the car. I drove to the store to get a roasted chicken and some pasta salad from the deli. I parked the car in the lot and strode to the store. I vaguely remember someone behind me. I turned around and reached for my pepper spray that I kept in my purse. I looked around and saw no one. I shrugged and went into the store, getting the chicken and pasta salad. I paid and headed back out to my dad's car. I was nearly there when I felt a sharp pain in the back of my head. I fell to the ground, the food scattering across the parking lot. I turned around and saw Jacob. He reared back and hit me. Blackness consumed me.

**A/N: Cliffhanger...sorry...all will be resolved with Jacob soon. Or will it? Read on to find out! Leave some love, please :)**

# Jacob Black

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 48: Jacob Black

### EPOV

After Bella left to get some dinner, Charlie and Emmett sat in the family room. I stiffly followed them and sat down next to Emmett. There was a game on the television. We all sat there in silence, waiting for Bella to return. It was nearly forty-five minutes later when Charlie checked his watch.

"Bella should be back by now," Charlie said.

"Yeah. I wonder what's taking so long." Emmett pondered. "I'm getting hungry."

"Emmett, you're always hungry," Charlie chided.

"I have a funny feeling," I muttered.

"What's that, Edward?" Charlie barked.

"I said that I have a funny feeling. Something's not right," I said louder. "I have this nagging feeling in my stomach that something went wrong. Emmett, how far is it to the grocery store?"

"About ten minutes. What to go check it out?" Emmett asked.

"Yeah," I replied, getting off the couch and grabbing my jacket. Both Emmett

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and Charlie got up and did the same. Charlie grabbed the keys to truck and we piled into a large red truck that looked as old as dirt. We pulled into the parking lot of the grocery store and saw flashing lights. As soon as the truck stopped, I pushed Emmett out of the passenger side and we both sprinted to the police cars. Charlie's car was still in the parking lot, food was spilled nearby and Bella's purse was on the ground. My heart sank to my feet. "No. Oh, God, NO!"

Emmett held me back and I struggled against him. Charlie jogged up to the police cars and his face paled. He walked to one of the deputies, "Peter, what's going on?" he asked in a shaky voice.

"Chief," Peter said, clearly surprised to see Charlie there. "Hold on. Let me get Chief Bailey."

Charlie nodded stoically and waited. My heart was racing and I willed Peter to move faster. He spoke to a tall gentleman near Charlie's car. He walked over to where we standing.

"Hello, Chief Swan."

"What's going on? Where's Bella?" Charlie barked.

"One of the cashiers said that she was attacked by a tall, Native American man and abducted. She was put into a red Volkswagen Rabbit and they headed north, toward LaPush," Chief Bailey replied.

"Well, are you going to do something besides sit on your asses?" Emmett seethed.

"We have the reservation police on alert, but we're not sure where they were headed," Bailey said with a frown.

"You do know that Bella has a restraining order against Jacob Black, right?" Charlie said. "He's the one who took her. You'll find that Jacob has a red Volkswagen Rabbit registered in his name."

"Is she alright?" I asked.

"The cashier said that she was unconscious when she was taken," Bailey explained. "We don't know anything further."

"Dad, can you take your car back to the house?" Emmett snarled.

"Yeah, Emmett. Why?"

"I can't just stand here and do nothing while these jackasses twiddle their thumbs. Bella could be hurt. Come on, Edward. We're going to LaPush," Emmett said forcefully.

"Emmett, don't do anything stupid," Charlie warned.

"Just standing here is being stupid. Let's go," Emmett said. We ran back to the truck. Emmett got into the driver's side and I slid into the passenger side. I prayed that Bella was okay. I needed her to be okay. I couldn't live without her.

"Is there a place that was special to Jacob and Bella?" I asked quietly.

"Yeah. First Beach. We'll go there first," Emmett said. He roared the car to life and sped out of the parking lot toward LaPush. We arrived at the Quileute Indian Reservation in fifteen minutes. We parked near a beach. Emmett grabbed a flashlight and we headed down onto the sand. We looked for Jacob's car. We looked for traces of Bella. We looked for any clue. As we were searching, I faintly heard a scream.

"Emmett, listen." We both were silent and there was the scream again. Emmett turned his body to a set of cliffs about a half mile from where we were. He pulled on my jacket and we ran back to the truck. We drove for a few minutes and parked off the side of the highway. We saw Jacob's car, haphazardly parked near the edge. We shared a look of panic and fear. We took off toward the cliffs and listened for the screams.



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We got closer to the edge and Emmett turned off the flashlight. It was a full moon and we could see pretty clearly. We heard a husky voice and another voice whimpering. My heart broke at the thought of Bella in pain. I strained to hear and understand what was being said. I moved closer trying to discern the words.

"You are such a fucking slut, Bella. You fucked him in the car. You whore," he spat, smacking her. "You're nothing but a worthless slut, tramp and bitch. You're lucky that I'm willing to take you back. Most men wouldn't want a ruined woman. That's what you are. Ruined. He fucked you and not he's done with you. You're nothing. Absolutely nothing, bitch."

Jacob stepped back and kicked Bella in the ribs. She cried out in pain. "Jacob, stop, please."

"I'll stop when you say you'll be with me forever, Bella. If I can't have you, then no one can," Jacob snarled. "You have a choice. Me or the water."

"I'll take the water, thank you very much," Bella spat. She tried to get up from where she was at, but Jacob forcefully shoved her down.

Emmett and I shared a wary look. Jacob was fucking huge. He was nearly 7 feet tall and had at least a hundred pounds on me and fifty on Emmett. However, we needed to stop this. Emmett slipped out his phone and texted Charlie our location. We needed the cops.

"Bitch. You will be mine. If you won't come to me willingly, I'll take what I want by force," he growled. He picked her up and his hands moved to her jeans.

"Jacob, NO! I don't want this. Please!" she cried, clawing at his hands. They would not relent. Emmett and I needed to act. I would not watch my love be raped by a psychopath. Emmett told me to go right and he would go left. We moved silently through the woods, getting closer to Jacob and Bella. Emmett was at Jacob's back and I was near Bella. She was struggling against him in vain. He had his hands clamped down on her arms, kissing her. She pushed,

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scratched and tried to move away. Jacob reared back and grabbed her wrist with both of his hands, injuring it with a twist of his hands. Bella screamed loudly. Emmett roared and jumped onto Jacob's back. Jacob was surprised and tried to buck Emmett off his back. I grabbed Bella by the waist and pulled her away from the edge of the cliff. She yelped as I touched her. When she looked at me she collapsed in my arms. "Edward. Help me, please."

"I am, baby. Go back to the truck. It's where Jacob was parked," I said into her hair.

"No, I'm not leaving you."

I heard Emmett scream and I knew I needed to help him. "Stay out of sight. Listen for the cops. They're on the way. I love you."

"I love you, Edward."

I looked back at Emmett and Jacob. They were struggling close to the edge of the cliff. Emmett had his back to the edge. I needed to get him away from precipice. I moved quietly and got close enough so I could jump onto Jacob. I used a rock to get the height I needed. I clasped my arms around his neck and squeezed. Jacob roared and he grabbed at my arms. He lifted me easily and flipped me over his shoulders. I landed roughly on my back. I groaned but hopped back up. Jacob turned his attention toward me, but his back was to the cliff edge and Emmett and I were closer to the woods. Bella was whimpering nearby. "She's mine fucker. She'll always be mine," Jacob sneered.

"I don't think so, Jacob," I responded. Jacob roared and moved toward me. He was almost to me when I heard the cops.

"Freeze, Black!"

Jacob looked up, panic crossing his features. His eyes narrowed and he looked back at me. He turned around and ran toward the edge of the cliff. He took a flying leap off the cliff into the frigid water below. Emmett and I ran to the edge of the cliff to see if we could observe where he landed. We noticed on the

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beach below, there were a number of police officers. The cops who were by the edge of the cliff looked down with us. I moved away from the edge and moved toward Bella. She was hiding behind a large boulder and crying.

"Bella? Sweetheart?" I said soothingly.

She looked at me with a wild look in her eyes. She blinked and launched herself at me, wrapping her arms around my neck and her legs around my waist. I grimaced as I may have injured my back in the ordeal with Jacob. "Edward. Oh, Edward. I'm so happy you're okay," she cried.

"I'm fine, baby. Are you alright?" I asked.

One of the police officers shined a light toward us. I noticed that Bella had a huge bruise on her jaw, her left eye was already swollen shut and she was cradling her wrist and arm. I gasped at her injuries, gathering her in my arms. I felt some dampness on her fleece. I pulled my hands away and saw blood on my fingers. "Bella, we need to get you to the hospital."

"Not without you, Edward," she cried.

"Come on, Bella," encouraged one of the officers. "We have an ambulance waiting. Sir, you'll have to come too." I nodded and led Bella out of the wooded area. We walked to the ambulance. They put Bella on the gurney and I sat on the bench. Emmett was talking to Chief Bailey. I motioned him over. He jogged over and clasped my hand.

"You did good, Cullen. I'm proud of you, brother," he said with a grin. "You're scrappy. I like it."

"I'm going to the hospital with Bella. Can you let Charlie know where we're going?" I asked.

"Got it. I'm following you in a squad car. I need to give my statement. You'll do the same later," Emmett explained.

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"Sir, we need to go," the EMT said. I nodded and gave Emmett a tired smile. He held out his fist. I bumped it with mine and settled back onto the bench. We sped off to the hospital. Bella's injuries looking much worse in the harsh light of the ambulance. In addition to her bruises on her face, there were hand marks around her neck, a cut above her left eyebrow and her clothes were torn. I gently reached for her uninjured hand and held it in both of mine. My own knuckles were bruised and cut up. I could feel my back tighten up as I sat next to Bella.

We reached the hospital in a matter of minutes. The EMTs had me get out first. I was moving slowly. They pulled out Bella's gurney and brought her into the emergency room. As we walked in, Charlie was waiting there for her, his face etched with worry. I still held onto Bella's good hand as we walked to the trauma room. "Sir, you need to wait out here," one of the nurses said. I tried to let go of Bella's hand.

"NO! He has to stay with me," Bella cried. "Please!"

"Sweetheart, if he's not family, he can't come into the trauma room with you," nurse scolded.

"He's her husband," Charlie lied. "Let him in there."

"Of course, Chief," the nurse responded. "I didn't realize your daughter had gotten married."

"It just happened over the Christmas weekend," Charlie covered. "They eloped to Vegas. I'm not happy about it, but he's her family. Let. Him. In."

"Yes, sir." She moved aside and let me past. I gave Charlie an appreciative nod as I walked past. Charlie slipped something into my hand. I saw it was a ring. He had taken off his own wedding band to cover his lie. I slid it over my finger and played the part of a dutiful husband. I stayed near Bella as they helped her into a hospital gown. As they removed her sweater, I saw the bruises on her arms and on her torso. They looked painful. I grimaced as I watched her move. She had a large bruise on her left collarbone and her left wrist was terribly

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swollen. Bella removed her ring with a pained look on her face and put it on her right hand. I gently caressed her race.

"Bella, are you okay?" I asked quietly.

She sniffled and nodded. "I hurt everywhere. He beat the shit out of me," she said.

"I know, baby. I can see the bruises. I was so worried about you, Bella," I said sadly. "Thank God Emmett knew enough to go to LaPush."

"If you and Emmett hadn't come, I don't even want to imagine what he would have done to me," Bella cried.

"We got there in time," I replied. "We got there in time. I love you, beautiful."

"Yeah, I'm gorgeous. I'm covered in bruises," she snorted.

"The bruises will go away. All that matters is that you're safe. My wife is safe," I said.

"Wife?"

"Yeah, I'm your husband. That's how I get to stay," I replied wiggling Charlie's ring on my finger.

"He's never taken this off since Mom left. He really must like you, Edward," she said with awe.

"I more than like him, Bella," Charlie said as he sauntered into the trauma room. "I can see how much he loves you, baby girl. I'm proud of you, son."

Charlie stood next to me and held out his hand. I grasped it and he pulled me into an awkward hug, rubbing my back. "Thank you, Chief Swan. I do love Bella. More than my own life."

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"Charlie. If you're my son-in-law, we're on a first name basis," Charlie said with a wink.

"Got it, Charlie."

A young doctor ambled into the trauma room, looking over Bella's chart.

"Good evening, Ms. Swan. I'm Dr. McKenna. I can see that you were attacked. Can you describe your injuries for me?"

"I was hit over the head with something. I'm not sure what. I did lose consciousness. I was punched in the face several times. I was kicked in the belly, punched in the shoulder and my wrist was twisted," Bella replied quietly. Dr. McKenna did a physical examination, lightly running his fingers over Bella's bruises. He felt along the back of her skull and she grimaced. He noted something on her chart. He continued his examination and looked at her wrist and shoulder. Bella gasped when he pressed on her collarbone. He noted that on her chart as well.

"Okay, well, we're going to get some x-rays done to see what the damage is. Could you be pregnant?" Dr. McKenna asked.

"No. I'm on birth control," Bella responded.

"When was your last period?" the nurse asked.

"The first week in December. I'm on Depo-Provera," Bella said.

"Any other medications?"

"I'm on ativan for anxiety as needed," Bella explained.

"Do you need some now?" Dr. McKenna asked.

"Please?" Bella asked.

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"1 milligram ativan, IV push," Dr. McKenna ordered. The nurse scurried and got the medication. She injected it in Bella's IV. "Okay, Ms. Swan, we're going to get some x-rays of your wrist, shoulder and ribs. Can you take her to x-ray?"

"Yes, doctor," the nurse responded. She maneuvered behind the bed and pushed it out of the trauma room. Bella held onto my hand with a vice grip. I moved along with her to the x-ray room. "I'm sorry, sweetheart, but your husband needs to stay outside."

Bella nodded. I kissed her forehead and they rolled her gurney into the x-ray room. Emmett walked up to me as I waited for Bella. "Dude, you look like shit. Have you gotten checked out?" Emmett asked.

"No, not yet. My back is killing me," I grumbled.

"What's up with the ring, Edward?" he said pointing to my left hand.

"They wouldn't let me into the trauma room unless I was family. Charlie said I was Bella's husband and he slipped me his wedding band."

"Damn," Emmett whispered.

"Tell me about it," I agreed. About fifteen minutes later, Bella was done with her x-rays. Her face was tear stained and she looked like she was in tremendous pain. We walked back to the trauma room and waited for the doctor. Before the nurse left I asked if she could look into getting Bella something for her pain. She gave me a tight smile and scampered off.

*Bitch. Don't fuck with me.*

Nurse Ratchet came back a few minutes later with some vicodin for Bella. She shook it off saying that vicodin made her sick. She rolled her eyes and went back to the doctor. She returned with darvocet. Bella took it and laid back in her gurney. About forty-five minutes later, Dr. McKenna came back with her test results.

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"Well, Ms. Swan, you've gotten lucky. You only have one minor broken bone. You have a small fracture in your clavicle. We'll need to put you into a sling and keep it immobilized for two weeks. The positive thing is that you don't need a cast. You can't raise your left arm above your head, so that will be your only restriction other than using the sling. In regards to your other injuries, you have a grade three sprain of the left wrist, bruised ribs and a mild concussion. You'll need to wear a wrist brace for the same amount of time as the sling, but it can be removed when you shower. Do you have any questions?"

"No, thank you. Um, can you check out my husband? He was also injured," Bella said quietly. She squeezed my fingers and gave me a smile.

"Of course. Let me grab another chart," Dr. McKenna replied. He darted off and grabbed a separate chart for me. The nurse came in and fitted Bella with a sling and helped her get dressed. "Okay, let's start off with the basics. Name, age and injuries."

"Edward Cullen. I'm 20. I was thrown by the guy who assaulted my wife and landed awkwardly on my back. It's been hurting ever since," I said.

"Okay, Mr. Cullen, can you take off your shirt? I want to check you for any injuries," Dr. McKenna said. I slipped off my jacket and unbuttoned my shirt. I turned around and his cold fingers felt up and down my back, along my spine. "I'm going to have you get some x-rays, though I didn't feel anything. I'd rather be safe than sorry."

I slipped my shirt back on my shoulders and followed the doctor to the x-ray room. They took several different x-rays and released me back to the trauma room. About a half hour later, Dr. McKenna returned with a set of x-rays.

"Well, Mr. Cullen, you appear to have several hairline fractures in your ribs. I can tape you up, but that's about all I can do for you. What would you like to do?"

"What would taping me up do?" I asked.



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"Provide extra support and compression. It's more uncomfortable than anything. If you had cracked your ribs, I would insist on it, but you have hairline fractures. You just need to take it easy and take some ibuprofen if it continues to hurt," Dr. McKenna said.

"I think I'll be fine. Thank you, Doctor," I said politely. I pulled on my shirt and buttoned it, not bothering to tuck it in.

"Okay, well, I'll get both of your discharge instructions and you're free to go," Dr. McKenna explained. He dashed off and returned moments later with some paperwork. Bella signed for her release as did I. We left the trauma room of our own volition, meeting Charlie and Emmett in the waiting room. Emmett drove the truck home and Charlie took Bella and I in the Malibu. When we got back to Bella's home, we all dragged our bodies through the front door.

Charlie held my arm back, effectively stopping me, "I don't want any funny business, but after what you did for my girl, it doesn't seem right for you to sleep on the couch. You can stay with Bella. She'll need it. You are her husband, after all," Charlie winked.

I smiled. "Thank you, Charlie. I promise you, no funny business."

"Get some sleep, son. Keep my girl safe," Charlie replied with a sad smile, clapping me on the shoulder. Emmett had already carried my bag up the stairs and put in Bella's room. Bella was struggling with changing. I dashed into the room, closing the door.

"Edward, you can't sleep here. My dad will freak," she said.

"Actually, he gave me the thumbs up. Just 'no funny business,'" I laughed. "Ow. I hurt too much for funny business."

"Me too, Edward. Can you help me?" she asked.

I took off her sling and gently lifted her sweater. I grabbed the sweatshirt that was on her bed and tucked it under my arm. I unclasped her bra, sliding the

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straps down her shoulders. Bella slipped her arms through the arms of the sweatshirt and I pulled it over her head. I then helped her put her sling back on. She moved to the bathroom and removed her contacts. I heard her cursing as she struggled with the left contact. She couldn't get her eye open enough to get it out. After fifteen minutes, she managed to get it out. I slipped off my jeans and shirt. I grabbed a t-shirt from my bag and a pair of flannel sleep pants. Bella walked out the bathroom and picked up a pair of flannel pajama bottoms and put them on after I assisted in helping her out of her jeans. She lay down on the bed, closing her eyes. I crawled into the tiny bed and lay on my side.

"Do you think they caught him, Edward?" she whispered.

"They had to. He had nowhere else to go," I supposed. "You're safe, baby. He can never hurt you again."

"How can you be so sure? You didn't see him get caught," Bella sniffled.

"I can't be sure, but thinking he's lurking in every corner is not healthy," I said as I ran my fingers through her hair. Bella yawned and burrowed into the pillows. "Go to sleep, beautiful. I love you, so much."

"I love you, too, Edward," she mumbled sleepily. She turned on her right side, cuddling next to me. It hurt a bit, but she needed this. I kissed her forehead and closed my own eyes. While I told Bella that I thought that Jacob could never hurt her, in the deep recesses of my mind, I still felt that he was still out there. I just hope that feeling never came to fruition and that he was in jail.

**A/N: Do you think they caught Jacob? Please leave me some love. It's my own personal heroine...I need a fix.**

# A Life Lived in Fear

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 49: A Life Lived In Fear...

### BPOV

Fuck my life. I am hurting. A lot. Fucking Jacob. I hate him. Asshat. I hope he fell onto a sharp rock and slowly bled to death in the freezing cold water. I hope that a shark found him and ate his legs. I hope they found him and arrested him and became a bitch to an inmate named Bubba. Yes, that works. Hopefully he'll feel the pain and embarrassment of what he did to me if that happens. Fucktard.

As much as I was exhausted after my ordeal with Jacob, I couldn't sleep. I was hurting too much. I also couldn't get my mind to shut down. It was racing and wouldn't stop. Edward was equally as restless. His handsome face was marred with a deep frown as he slept. I wanted to touch him, to comfort him but I was in too much pain. Instead of tossing and turning in my tiny bed, I decided to get up and watch some television. I slipped out of my bedroom and limped down the stairs to the family room. I sat down on the couch and curled up. I put on the television, not really watching what was on the screen. As I was watching the barrage of infomercials, I faintly heard someone come down the stairs. I tensed up and looked at the staircase with an anxious glance. I couldn't see much, but I recognized the pants as Edward's.

"Hey, Edward," I said quietly.

"I woke up to go to the bathroom, but you weren't in bed. Is everything alright?" Edward asked with a frown.

"I couldn't get comfortable. Every way I lay, something was in pain. I didn't want to keep tossing and turning, preventing you from sleeping," I said with a grimace. "You were up at the ass crack of dawn."

"I couldn't sleep, either, beautiful. I'm not as injured as you, but I couldn't get comfortable," Edward responded as he sat down on the couch next to me. He gave me a smile and caressed my cheek. I leaned into his tender touch, tears spilling over my cheeks. "What are you thinking about, Bella?"

"How much I hate Jacob. How he said that he 'loved me' but he never showed me an ounce of compassion or tenderness like you," I mumbled. "How he constantly broke me down; calling me nothing, stupid and slut. How he would control everything I did."

"Bella, I know that Jacob hurt you, tremendously. However, you need to know that you are none of the things that Jacob ever called you. You are *everything* to me. You are one of the smartest people I know, along with the most loving, most caring and most gentle. You are definitely NOT a slut. In any sense of the word. I find it so endearing that you waited until you were in love before you had sex someone. I wish I had done the same. However, stupid male hormones got in the way. In regard to the tenderness and compassion, I'm just doing what a normal human being would do. Bella, you are so special and should be treated as such: with respect and love," Edward said as he gently caressed my face, running his fingers through my messy hair. "I mean it when I say that I love you more than my own life. I would have died for you today on the those cliffs. I'm definitely glad that I didn't. There are so many things that I want to do with you. I want to see you walk down the aisle to me, wearing a beautiful white dress. I want to see you pregnant with our child, a perfect brown-eyed angel. I want to see us work collaboratively, like Carmen and Eleazar, in our lives and careers. I want it all with you, Bella."

I slowly moved closer to Edward, putting my good arm around his neck. He gently wrapped his arms around my waist, holding me close to him. "Edward, I want all of that too. I want to travel the world with you. I want to make music with you, in both the literal and figurative sense," I said. Edward chuckled and he kissed my forehead. "I am just so fearful that as soon as we get to where we

want in life, it's going to bite us in the ass."

"My mom used to say this to me when I was younger, 'A life lived in fear is a life that is half lived.' You can go through the motions, constantly looking over your shoulder of what *might* happen. However, you'll miss things along the way, some good and some bad. I never really understood what that really meant until after I lost my mom. Your existence can end in a blink of an eye. If you live your life full of regret, then what's the point? Sure, I moped around after my mom passed and my dad abandoned me. I was a shell of what I used to be. However, that all changed when I met you. Being with you, has brought me back to life. I'm no longer a shell. I'm no longer afraid of whatever curve ball is thrown at me. I'll have you by my side. Together, we can conquer anything," Edward said into my hair.

"You're right. How did you get to be so smart?" I teased.

"I'm a fucking genius. Or well that's what my IQ test says," Edward laughed.

"Oh really? What's your IQ, Cullen?"

"157. Mensa material. However, no thank you. They're a bunch of nerds," Edward snorted.

"I hate to burst your bubble, Edward. You are a nerd."

"I have nerd-like qualities. However, I do not act nor do I look like a nerd. How many nerds have two tattoos, a six pack and play piano like a madman?" he mused.

"Not many. However, you're my nerd and I love you, very much," I said as I pressed a kiss over his heart. Edward laughed. "What are you giggling about?"

"You want to know why I got the swan over my heart?"

I nodded and begged for him to continue with my eyes. "Well, whenever you don't kiss me on the lips, you always kiss me over my heart. That's why I got

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your swan there. Even when we're apart, I'll have your kiss over my heart to soothe me."

I leaned up to Edward's lip and brushed mine across his. The tingle that is usually associated with Edward ran through my body and I moaned quietly. Edward cupped my face, being careful of my injuries and swept his tongue into my mouth. I pulled away and lay my head in his lap. "I love you, Edward."

"I love you, too, beautiful girl. Try and get some rest. You've got to be exhausted," he said as gently brushed my hair from my face. I nodded and attempted to get comfortable on Edward's lap. He grabbed a pillow and placed it under my head and threw a blanket over my legs. My eyes drooped and I managed to fall into a fitful, albeit restful sleep, with Edward humming my lullaby as I drifted to sleep.

xx LC xx

When I woke up, it was daylight. My head was still in Edward's lap. His body was contorted as he tried to rest his head on the armrest of the couch. I reached for my glasses which I had taken off when I laid down and put them on. I looked at the clock on the cable box and saw that it was after ten in the morning. I stiffly got up and went into the kitchen. Emmett was in there eating some breakfast.

"Morning, Isabelly. How are you feeling?" he asked, his mouth full of cereal.

"In pain. That's how I feel," I grumbled. I walked to the pantry and got some ibuprofen and some water from the fridge. I popped four pills and sat down on one of the chairs. "Is Dad home?"

"No. He went to the station to rip Chief Bailey a new one. He was not happy with how they handled the situation yesterday. I won't be surprised if Dad goes to the mayor and demands his immediate dismissal," Emmett chuckled.

"What happened? How did you and Edward know where I was?" I asked as I sipped my water.

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"I knew that you and Jacob spent a good deal of time at First Beach. I figured he'd take you there," Emmett replied, shrugging his shoulders. "It was Edward who heard your screams and that's when we went to the cliffs."

"Oh. Thank God you both made it in time," I said quietly.

"Yeah. I don't want to even imagine what Jacob would have done if we hadn't gotten there when we did," Emmett said with a shudder. "I'd kill him."

"I think you're behind Edward," I said, reaching to grab his hand.

The phone rang in the kitchen and Emmett reached behind him to pick it up. "Hello?" Emmett grunted a bit and said that "we'd be there as soon as possible." I furrowed my brows and poked Emmett in the bicep. He held up one finger and grunted a few more times before hanging up. "We need to go to the police station. Wake up sleeping beauty and we gotta boogie," Emmett commanded.

I nodded and got up slowly. I strolled into the family room and sat down next to Edward. "Edward, baby. Wake up, handsome," I said quietly, running my fingers through his hair. He stirred and scrunched his nose. He brought up his hand and scrubbed his face, blinking his eyes.

"What's wrong, Bella?" he asked, his voice rough with sleep.

"We need to go to the police station," I replied. "I'm going to take a quick shower in the hall bathroom. You can use the shower in my dad's room."

"I'll wait. No big deal," Edward said as he stretched. He raised his arms above his head and he yawned. He tried to stretch his body to its full length, but he yelped in pain. "Crap. I forgot my ribs. That didn't feel good."

"There's ibuprofen in the pantry," I said as I got up. "Help yourself to anything you want for breakfast."

"Thanks, beautiful. I love you," Edward said as he got up off the couch.

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"I love you too," I said, standing on my tiptoes to press a kiss to his jaw. I moved up the stairs and slipped my sling off my shoulder. I managed to take off the sweatshirt and pull down my pajama bottoms. I started the water in the shower and waited for it to heat up. I slid into the shower and let the water cascade over my aching body. I looked at the bruises and injuries. I grimaced as I began washing my body. I moved deliberately so I wouldn't fall. I awkwardly tried to wash my hair with one hand, but it was not working. I stepped out of the shower and called down to Edward. He was already in my room.

"What's up, Bella?" he asked.

I held the towel that I grabbed around my torso, "I need some help. I can't wash my hair," I said, casting my eyes downward. Edward grabbed his toiletry bag and clothes and eased into the bathroom. He took off his sleep clothes and helped me back into the shower, following me. He squirted some of my shampoo into his large hands and began massaging the gel into my wet hair. I closed my eyes and I felt tears build behind my eyelids. I sniffled and the tears poured over on my cheeks. Edward pulled my head up and forced me to look at him.

"Don't cry, Bella. Please. It makes my heart ache when I see you cry," he said sadly.

"I'm embarrassed, Edward. I feel like such an invalid," I sobbed quietly.

"Baby, you went through a horrendous ordeal. Let me help you. Let me take care of you. Let me love you," Edward said as he kissed my temple. He eased me back into the hot stream and rinsed my hair with a loving, tender touch. He then picked up my body wash and washed my body again. His fingers and hands moved carefully, not wanting to injure me further. I stepped back into the water, rinsing the soap. I looked at Edward as he turned around and grabbed his own body wash. His entire back was bruised and scratched up.

"Oh, Edward."

"What?" he asked, turning his head.



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"Your back is all torn up," I replied. I brought up my good hand and ran my fingers over his bruises. "Does it hurt?"

"Not so much. It just hurts a bit to breathe," he explained as he maneuvered his body under the showerhead. He quickly washed his body and scrubbed his hair. I stepped out and began drying myself as Edward finished his shower. I pulled on a pair of red boy shorts and sat down on the toilet, trying to catch my breath. Edward turned off the water and stepped out of the shower. I handed him a towel, which he wrapped around his waist. He turned around and looked at his back and grimaced. "Damn. That fucker really pulled a number on me."

I remained seated on the toilet, with the towel wrapped around my torso and the tears fell down my face again. I tried to squelch my crying but to no avail. Edward dropped to his knees in front of me and wiped my tears away. "Bella, I'm fine. Really. It looks worse than it really is. Please don't cry, beautiful," he said quietly.

"I'm so sorry, Edward. So sorry," I said, wrapping my arm around his neck and crying into his shoulder. He pulled me closer to him, my legs straddling his chest. He scratched my back and soothed me. He pulled away and looked at me, giving me a crooked smirk. He kissed my lips carefully and gracefully stood back up. He slipped his boxers on and pulled on a pair of jeans. I was still sitting, feeling incredibly sorry for myself. Edward dashed out of the bathroom and returned with some clothes for me. He held out a bra that matched my panties, which surprised me and I put my arms through the straps. He snapped it along my back and assisted me in putting on my jeans.

He then picked up my brush and worked it through my long, tangled hair. "Do you have a blow dryer, beautiful?" he asked.

"You're not blow drying my hair, Edward. I'll be fine," I said, rolling my eyes.

"I don't want you getting sick, Bella. Blow dryer?" Edward pressed.

I pointed under the sink and Edward got out my blow dryer and plugged it in. Using my brush, he mostly dried my hair and picked up a hair tie. Edward

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pulled my hair into a messy bun and smiled proudly. "I missed my calling, Bella. I should have been a hair dresser."

"Edward, that wouldn't work," I giggled.

"Why?" he asked, confusion running across his face.

"You're straight," I laughed.

"Oh, so you need to be gay in order to do someone's hair? Okay, Bella. So stereotypical," he scoffed. "I did good for someone who has this mess," he said as he pointed to the bronze mop on his head. "Damn cowlicks. Hopefully our children will inherit your hair."

I laughed and reached for my shirt that Edward had picked out for me. He lifted it over my head and assisted in putting on my sling and wrist brace. "You really should have stuck with medicine, Edward. You have a great bedside manner."

"Thanks but no thanks. I'll stick with music," Edward said as he pulled on a grey t-shirt. He grabbed a black sweater and put it over his shirt. He put some cologne on and exited the bathroom. I put on some chapstick and deodorant before putting on some bodyspray. I slipped on a pair of ballet flats and limped downstairs. Edward was on my heels. Emmett was sitting on the couch, texting someone.

"You ready to go?" Emmett asked.

"Yep. Let's get this done," I said with a grimace. We walked out to the truck. Edward helped me into the cab and slid in next to me. Emmett got into the driver's seat. We drove to the police station and parked the rust bucket in one of the visitor's spots. Edward again assisted me in getting out of the car and we walked into the familiar police station. We were ushered back into the conference room in the station. My dad was already in there, speaking with one of the deputies, Peter. Edward and I sat down on the side by my dad. Emmett was sitting at the end of the conference table.

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"How are you doing, Bella?" Peter asked.

"I'm hurting a lot, but other than that, I'm fine," I responded quietly, leaning against Edward.

"I'm glad that you were not seriously injured, Bella," Peter said with a compassionate smile. "Anyhow, I need you to tell me what happened yesterday."

I nodded and told him what had transpired, how Jacob attacked me in the parking lot of the grocery store and knocked me unconscious and drove us to the cliff in LaPush. I explained how I received every injury, every bruise, and every pain, both physical and emotional. Peter was scribbling all that I had to say on a legal pad.

"What happened on the cliff after Emmett and Edward showed up?" Peter asked.

"Emmett jumped on Jacob's back and surprised him. Jacob was trying to... trying to..." I stuttered.

"Trying to what, Bella?"

"R...r...rape me," I sniffled. "He said that if I wouldn't go to him willingly, he'd take me by force. He called me a slut and a whore."

"So, Jacob was distracted by Emmett. What happened to you?" Peter asked.

"Edward pulled me away from the edge of the cliff. He tried to get me to go to the truck, but I was too afraid to leave. I heard Emmett scream and Edward moved me so I was out of sight. Edward helped Emmett by attempting to put Jacob into a sleeper hold. It didn't work. Jacob flipped Edward over his body and Edward landed on his back, hard."

"What happened next?" Peter pressed.

## La Cantante

"The police showed up and Jacob jumped off the cliff," I said. "Did you get him?"

Peter blanched and gulped. "I'm sorry, but no. We assume that he was killed on impact and his body was washed out to sea with the current. We've had scuba divers searching the area since first light. We're going to search for a few days, but if we find nothing, he's going to be ruled dead."

I nodded and wiped my tears from my face. Edward put his arm around me and pulled me close to him. He kissed my temple and gave me a smile. Then he turned to Peter, "What happens if he did survive?"

"We would arrest him for kidnapping, attempted murder, attempted sexual assault and a slew of other charges. We would need to find him, first," Peter explained. "We've towed his car and placed it in the police impound as evidence. We've also interviewed his friends and family. They have not been helpful, to say the least."

Emmett grunted and slammed his hands down on the table. We all turned and looked at him. His face was turned into a furious glare. "I have a complaint I'd like to lodge against the department. Especially Chief Bailey. He handled this whole situation improperly. He was focused on the 'cold scene' and not looking for Bella. Edward and I should NOT have been the ones to find her. He was too busy with his thumb up his ass to do anything."

"Well, Emmett, that situation has been handled. Chief Swan spoke with the mayor and expressed similar concerns. This is not the first time that a complaint has been brought against Chief Bailey. He's been placed on administrative leave, pending a formal investigation. I'm his replacement, for the time being," Peter explained. "Ideally, we'd love for you to come back, Chief. You ran a tight ship. We all respect you and what you did for the force."

"We'll see what the mayor says, but I wouldn't be able to come back for a few months. I'm dealing with some minor medical things that I need to take care of before I return to force," Charlie said, blushing.

## La Cantante

Peter smiled and turned back to me. "Do you have anything else that you want to add, Bella?"

"Not really. I am curious, though. I had my purse, keys and phone with me in the car. I couldn't find them when I left the hospital at my home. Are they in evidence?" I asked.

"No, we brought them back to the station. Unfortunately, your phone was ruined. The screen was completely smashed as Jacob had run over it with his car. I'll go and get that and your purse from the evidence lock up. We kept it there for safe keeping," Peter said as he stood up to retrieve my items. He returned a few moments later with my purse, car keys and destroyed phone. "Is there anything else?"

"No, I don't think so," Charlie said. "You'll contact us if there is any change with the Jacob situation?"

"Of course. On behalf of the Forks Police Force, I am truly sorry for the whole situation. We are working as quickly as we can to rectify the problem. Call me personally if you have any concerns," Peter said as he handed me a card with his name and phone on it. I slipped it in my purse and we headed out of the car.

Edward and I walked to the truck when Charlie stopped us. "Here kids, you take my car. I'm off for the next few days and I really don't have any other plans than sit on the recliner and watch football and basketball. There's a cellular store in Port Angeles if you need a new phone, Bella. I can put you back on my bill, if you want," Charlie said.

"If it's all the same to you, Charlie. I'd like to keep Bella on my cell phone contract. If Jacob returns, he still won't have her number," Edward said. "We can still go to Port Angeles and get you a new phone to replace the broken one."

"Can we do that? We're not even in the same state as my phone number?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"It's a national plan. I don't see why not," Edward replied. I shrugged and reached for the car keys. Charlie handed them to Edward and gave me a smirk.

"He has two hands, Bells. Edward's driving," Charlie said with a grin.

"Fine. Let's get me a new phone. Then, we're heading back home so I can take a nap. I'm tired," I grumbled.

"Me too, beautiful," Edward said as he guided me to the passenger side of the car. "We'll call you on our way back from Port Angeles. Thank you, Charlie."

"No problem, son," Charlie replied.

"Oh, before I forget! Here's your ring back," Edward said as he gave Charlie back his wedding band. Charlie placed it back on his finger and clapped Edward on his shoulder.

Edward slipped into the driver's seat and I guided him to Port Angeles. We pulled up to the store and walked in. Edward was approached by a pretty red-headed salesperson. She was drooling all over him. He explained the situation about my attack and the damage to my phone. She looked at me and sneered at me like I was the dirt under her feet, laughing at my situation.

*Thanks for the sympathy, bitch. My bruises have bruises and you're laughing at me? Fuck you.*

Edward scoffed and asked to see her manager. She ruffled up and scurried off to get her manager. Edward explained what had happened. The manager gave her a dirty look and told her to take her lunch, permanently. The manager then bent over backwards to assist us in getting my new phone set up. He told us that he would have had to charge us for the new phone, but decided against it since it was due to an attack. He even upgraded Edward's plan for free and offered him a new phone as well. Edward said no, that all we needed was a new phone for me. They somehow got the information off the SIM card and transferred it to my new phone, along with all of my ringtones and music.

## La Cantante

We left the store in about an hour and headed back to Forks. We stopped along the way to pick up some lunch. We ended up at a fast food place, eating some unhealthy burgers and fries. I hadn't even realized that I didn't eat since yesterday at lunch. I was actually very hungry and I devoured my food. Edward had done the same and actually went back up to the counter got some more. We pulled into the driveway and I was dead on my feet. Edward and I walked up the steps, through the front door. Edward mumbled his 'hellos' and I did a half-hearted wave. We both walked up the stairs and to my full-sized bed. I toed off my shoes and took off my glasses. I lay down and closed my eyes. Edward took off his sweater and shoes and pulled me to his chest. He kissed my forehead, but I was already asleep.

xx LC xx

I woke up to an empty bed. I looked around and pulled my glasses onto my face. It was dark out and I was really disoriented. I shook my head to get rid of the cobwebs. I walked down the stairs and found all three guys on the couch watching a basketball game.

"Hey, guys," I said sleepily.

"Hi, Bells. How are you feeling?" asked Charlie.

"I'm a little better. Still really sore. How are you feeling, Charlie?" I asked.

"I'm fine. I'm going in for a treatment tomorrow. Sue is picking me up early. I'll probably be a grump tomorrow evening," Charlie snorted.

I frowned and sat down next to Edward. "What do you guys want for dinner?" I asked.

"Nothing that you're cooking, Bella," Emmett warned. "I already ordered pizza, breadsticks, mozzarella sticks and tiramisu. I'm leaving in a little bit to go get it."

"I'm going with him," Charlie said.

## La Cantante

"Okay. Good to know," I said warily. They were up to something. "Where did you get the pizza from?"

"Papa Rosarios," Emmett answered.

"That's in Port Angeles! Why are you driving an hour for pizza?" I asked.

"I have a taste for it. They have the best sauce," Emmett said, rubbing his tummy. "Besides, we need to pick up the DVDs from the video store," Emmett hinted, arching a brow.

"What are you getting, Em?" Edward asked obliviously.

"Um, that new vampire movie. The one with Robert Pattinson? It came out in the summer," Emmett replied. "Come on, Dad. Let's go now to see if they have movie."

"Got it. See you guys later," Charlie said, grabbing his coat. He and Emmett shared a smile and scurried out the door.

"That was weird," Edward said.

"No, it wasn't. They're hinting at something. Something that I was supposed to give you yesterday, but didn't for obvious reasons," I said sheepishly. "It's the rest of your Christmas present."

"Bella, you got me this awesome watch. You didn't need to get me anything else," Edward admonished.

"Trust me when I say that you will love this," I said as I got up off the couch. I walked to the Christmas tree and pulled out the wrapped DVDs from underneath. I handed Edward the box and he quirked a brow. "Open it, Edward."

He carefully unwrapped his present. He turned the box in his hand and saw the Cullen crest, with the pictures I had chosen for the cover art. Edward opened



## La Cantante

the box and looked at each of the DVD sleeves. "Bella, is this what I think it is?"

"I worked with Esme. She told me about your mom and how close you both were. She gave me all the videos of you and your mom from when you were little. She also gave me pictures from she and Elizabeth were younger to up until she died. They were mixed together into the set of DVDs with music and digital artwork. I watched the first one and I cried. Edward, I hope you like it. I really wanted to do something special for you since you've done so much for me," I said, as I bit my lip.

Edward put his face into his hands and his shoulders began to shake. Did I do something wrong? Did I fuck up? I tentatively reached for Edward's knee and placed my hand there. Edward pulled his hands away and there were tears streaming down his face. He laced his fingers with mine and looked into my eyes. "Bella, you have no idea how much this means to me," he said, his voice breaking. "Every day, I forget a detail about her, a moment that we shared. I used to watch the videos until our VCR died. We never replaced it, so I couldn't watch them anymore. Now, you've given me an opportunity to be with my mom again."

Edward put the DVDs on the coffee table and pulled me to him, holding me tightly. It hurt, but I didn't care. I could feel his tears soaking through my sweater as my tears were ruining his shirt. "I'm so happy I was able to do this for you, Edward. You mean the world to me. I love you."

"As I love you," he said as he kissed my lips. He tentatively licked my bottom lip, asking for entrance. I opened my mouth and happily granted it. My one hand gently caressed his stubbled chin as he tenderly cupped my face. "Can we watch one?"

"I think that's why Emmett and Charlie went to Port Angeles for pizza," I laughed.

Edward opened the DVD case and pulled out the first disc. He put it into the player and settled on the couch with me. He wrapped his arms around my waist

## La Cantante

and we watched as the memories of Edward and his mom flickered across the screen. Every so often, Edward would pause the DVD and explain an inside joke or something that happened that didn't translate on the video. His face so happy, so light. After we watched the first disc, Edward turned to me, "I have another present for you too. Well, a couple, but I'll hold off on the second one. It's nowhere near as poignant as this, but still it's special."

Edward darted off to my room. I heard him shuffle in his suitcase. He returned a few moments later with a small box. He handed it to me with a sheepish grin. I opened the wrapping and inside was a CD and another smaller box. "What's this?"

"It's a compilation CD of all our special songs, arranged by yours truly. I took the songs that meant something to us and arranged them for the piano and voice. Unfortunately, you'll have to listen to my voice in the recording, but I would love to re-record them with you singing some of them. There's also your lullaby and a few other songs that were inspired by you and our relationship. Open up the other box," Edward encouraged.

I took out the other box and opened it up. Inside was a sapphire necklace that matched the earrings and ring that Edward had given me. I gasped. "Edward, it's beautiful."

"Now you have the whole set," Edward said as he pulled the necklace from the box. He clasped it around my neck, holding up my ponytail. I lightly fingered the beautiful gem and pressed a tender kiss to his lips.

"Thank you, Edward," I whispered. "It's perfect. You're perfect."

"Not really. Not as perfect as you. You gave me my memories. I got you some colorful rocks," Edward replied sheepishly.

"Well, I love my colorful rocks. And the CD. I love you," I said reverently, running fingers across his cheek.

## La Cantante

"I love you, too. Thank you for the DVDs. I will treasure them, always," Edward said, tears glistening in his eyes.

"I also got another set for Esme and Carlisle. I know that they would enjoy them as well," I said.

"They certainly will. Want to watch another one? Please?" Edward asked, bouncing on the couch.

"Edward, we can watch anything you like," I giggled. He popped up and took out another disc and put it into the DVD player. We watched with rapt attention until Charlie and Emmett came home. We all ate the cold pizza. However, I was never so grateful for cold pizza in my whole life. I managed to give Edward the greatest gift anyone could ever bestow, memories of his mom. Memories that he would always have and always treasure. Memories that will be passed down to our children, our children's children.

After dinner, Emmett went upstairs to talk to Rosalie and Charlie went to bed. Edward and I stayed up most of the night watching his videos. We laughed. We cried. We spent quality time with each other. I eventually nodded off and Edward carried me up to my room. He changed me and I faintly heard him mumble something.

"I'm going to come through with promise sooner than later, Bella. I love you, *il mio cantante*. You are my life now and your happiness, your safety will always come first."

I hummed and drifted into a deeper sleep at the prospects of what Edward said. However, in my mind, I knew. In my heart, I knew. In my soul, I knew. I knew it all along. It was only a matter of time. Now the time had come.

**A/N: Leave me some love...what do you think Edward's second gift is? Do you think Jacob is dead or is hiding out? Should Charlie go back to the Forks Police Department after Chief Bailey is fired? Let me know what you think!**

# Is a Life Half Lived

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine! A 150 comments! Wow! Thank you oodles if you've left me some love (or hate).*

## Chapter 50: ...Is a Life Half Lived

### EPOV

I had wanted to propose to Bella since I gave her the promise ring. I knew in my heart, in my mind and my soul that she was the woman for me. However, the logical part of my brain chastised me saying that it was too soon. My family expected me to propose during the Thanksgiving. I knew I wasn't. I hadn't gotten Bella's ring. I spoke with Carlisle and with Jenks, I took out a portion of my inheritance that I was going to receive on my 21st birthday. Carlisle had offered my mother's engagement ring that my sperm donor had given to her, but I didn't want it. That ring, while important to me, was tainted. I wanted something special for Bella. Something that was uniquely her, specifically designed with her tastes in mind. I had originally thought of asking Alice to come with me to pick out Bella's ring. However, I asked Esme. She squealed and hugged me tightly.

We drove all around the town and found nothing that was Bella. Esme finally suggested that we go to New York City to work with a jeweler friend that she knew since college. I decided to head to my tattoo artist and get an idea of a tattoo done on my chest. As I was waiting for my stencil to be completed, Bella texted me. We chatted for a bit. When I was called back, I abruptly ended our conversation. I felt bad about that, but Jimmy had a 'no cell phone rule' in his tattoo parlor while getting ink done. He put the stencil above my heart and I sat through two hours of torture.

## La Cantante

We left early the next morning and pulled into a posh neighborhood. Esme led me to an upscale jewelry store and we walked in. We were greeted by a menacing security guard. Esme informed him that we had an appointment with Maggie. He nodded and led us into the store to a back office. Esme and I sat down in the office and I fidgeted nervously. Esme squeezed my hand and gave me a smile. We waited for a few minutes when a short woman with strawberry blonde curly hair walked in. She looked like a leprechaun. She went right up to Esme and gave her a hug.

"Esme, it's so good to see you. It's definitely been too long," she said with a light Irish accent. "What can I do for you today?"

"Maggie, it has been too long. We should do lunch soon," Esme said with a warm smile. "This is my son, Edward. He's looking for an engagement ring for his girlfriend."

"Hello, Edward. It's nice to meet you," she said as she shook my hand.

"It's lovely to meet you as well," I said politely.

"Okay, so tell me about your girlfriend," Maggie said as she took out a pad of paper.

"What do you want to know?" I asked.

"How old is she? What does she look like? What drew you to her? Her best qualities? The basics," Maggie said with a wave of the hand.

"Well, Bella is nineteen. She's 5'4", with beautiful, long brown hair and the most perfect brown eyes. Here's a picture," I said as I passed over my phone. A picture of the two of us was the wallpaper on my phone. Emmett had snapped a picture of us; Bella was smiling at the camera and I was smiling at Bella. It was one of my favorite pictures of us.

"She's absolutely gorgeous. Such flawless skin and a radiant smile," Maggie said as she passed my phone back to me.

## La Cantante

"She is the most beautiful woman I know," I said with a reverent smile. "Both inside as well as outside."

"What attracted you to Bella?" Maggie asked.

"Her clumsiness, initially. She ran into me on her first day of college. When we touched, an electric current flew through my body. I had never felt that before. I invited her to a party where my band was playing. The band, Breaking Midnight, had wanted to perform this specific song and we needed a female vocalist. Bella and my sister came to the party and I asked my sister. She said no but Bella offered. We rehearsed briefly backstage and the feeling I had from her only intensified. I felt complete when I sang with her. I felt complete when I was near her. It was unreal how she made me feel and I barely knew her. I had lost my mom at a young age and I was lost and bereft without my mom. Those feelings went away when I was with Bella. I knew after I had sung with her that she was my soul mate. My singer.

"My mom and I always would bond over music. She called me her singer. *Il suo cantante*. She said I completed her. Bella, in her own way, completes me. She's my singer. *Il mio cantante*. I love her more than I can imagine. My heart skips a beat when I'm near her. My heart aches when I'm away from her. Her kindness, intelligence, selflessness and bravery is what drew me to her. Her talent and beauty are added bonuses. She could have webbed feet and a third eye, but I would still love her immensely," I said fervently.

"I can tell how much you love your Bella," Maggie said. "Can you describe her style for me?"

"She is a classic beauty. Not overly trendy. If given a choice between pants and dress, she'd choose pants. However, she does enjoy getting dolled up," I explained.

"Okay, Edward, here's what I envision for your Bella," she said. She passed me the pad of paper and on it was a sketch. The ring that she drew was breathtaking. It had pave set diamonds on the shoulders of the ring, with baguettes closest to the center stone. The stone in the middle was a large oval

## La Cantante

diamond. It was beautiful and perfect for Bella. "Now, I have a question for you. How much are you willing to spend?"

I looked at Esme and arched a brow. "You might be surprised when I say this, but money is not a point of contention. My mom left me a sizable inheritance and I will be comfortable for the rest of my life."

"Okay. Well, then, are you happy with the sketch I've created for you?" Maggie asked.

I nodded emphatically. "It's perfect for her."

"Okay. Let's talk about the ring. Do you want platinum or white gold?" Maggie asked as she pulled out an invoice.

"Platinum, please." I said as I leaned forward in the chair.

"In regard to the center stone, what size do you want?" Maggie asked.

"No more than two carats," I replied. "However, I've done my research. I want a well-cut diamond with good clarity and color. No schmutz in the diamond or it being a funny yellow color."

"Oh, I only work with the best diamonds. Typically D-flawless diamonds are what we use here," Maggie said with a smile. "Here's an estimate of what the ring would cost, using platinum and the size that you asked for. It's a price for the largest diamond that you mentioned."

She passed the invoice and I gulped. That was a lot of zeros. However, I wanted this for my Bella. Esme looked at the invoice and gave Maggie a look. "Maggie, we're friends. Surely you can give my son a better price than that," she admonished.

"I'll give you a deal if you explain something for me," Maggie replied. "Edward, you said your mom died?"

## La Cantante

"Yes. I was adopted by Esme and Carlisle when I was nine," I explained.

"Oh, now I get it. What happened to your father? Did he die too?" Maggie asked as she reached for the invoice to adjust the price.

"No. He relinquished his parental rights about a few months after my mom passed. He wasn't fit to raise me. I haven't spoken to him since," I responded.

Maggie nodded and passed the invoice back to me. It was still a lot of zeros, but a few less than what was originally on there. I looked at Esme and she gave me an encouraging look. "Let's do this," I said, huffing out a deep breath.

"Excellent. Come back right before Christmas, the 23rd, and we'll have the ring for you. What size ring does Bella wear?" Maggie asked.

"Size six. I purchased a promise ring for her earlier this year and that was the size I got for that ring and it fit perfectly," I said.

"Great. Let's get you all sorted with the payment and we'll begin making your ring," Maggie said excitedly. She bounced out of the room and gathered a few things. I pulled out my credit card, or rather my parents' credit card. The money from my trust would not be released until after the first of the year. When it was released, Carlisle who was on the account, would use the money that we allotted to pay his credit card bill. He also said that I was getting him a ton of reward points. Maggie returned with several papers, and a small plastic envelope. "Here's the paperwork on the ring that you chose. It'll be made from scratch. Also, here's the paperwork on the diamond that we'll be using."

I took the papers and slipped them into my messenger bag. Maggie then set up a microscope. It was displayed on a small television screen in the room. "Here's the diamond that I am using in your Bella's ring," Maggie boasted. She prattled on about the qualities of the diamond. The only thing that I was concerned with that it sparkled on my girl's finger. "Do you have any questions, Edward?"

"What about the payments?" I asked.



## La Cantante

"You'll put approximately half down today as a deposit on the ring. You'll pay the remainder when you pick up the ring," Maggie offered.

"Okay. Great," I replied, handing over my credit card. She took it and ran it through the machine by the computer in the office. The printer spat out the receipt and I scrawled my signature on the bottom of the paper. Maggie handed me a final receipt and we got up to go. "Thank you for your help today."

"Edward, it was my pleasure. Please let me know how Bella likes the ring. I want to add your picture to my engagement wall of fame in my office," Maggie said, giving me a hug.

"As soon as we take our engagement photos, we'll send you one," I said, returning the hug.

"Fabulous! It was lovely to see you Esme. Let's plan for lunch after the first of the year?" Maggie asked.

"I would love to. Have a great Christmas, Maggie. Give my love to Seamus," Esme replied.

"I will. Thank you for coming in and I'll see you in about a week, Edward," Maggie smiled.

I grinned in return and we headed out. My mom drove us back to my apartment. She gave me a kiss and went home. Later that night, Bella and I talked. She teased about my proposing and how she would say yes and even suggest going to Vegas to elope. I got up and started searching for flights to Vegas. She screeched, saying that she needed a proper proposal. I agreed with her, saying she needed hearts and flowers. I even hinted that she should get a custom made ring.

*Oh, if she only knew.*

The rest of the week dragged on and I was getting antsy to pick up Bella's ring. I woke up early on December 23rd and drove to New York City, parking in

front of Maggie's jewelry store. She beamed when I walked in. She was so excited that she was trembling. She pulled me into the same office where we discussed the ring. She ran into the backroom and returned with an intricate box. She placed it in front of me. I looked up at her, almost afraid to touch the box. I took a few deep breaths and picked up the box and opened it up. Nestled inside was the ring that Maggie had designed. It was more beautiful than I had ever imagined. The diamonds sparkled brightly, almost looking like a miniature sun in the ring. I pulled it out and was shocked at how heavy it was. I was awestruck at its beauty and how perfect it was for Bella.

"Well? You're killing me here," Maggie laughed.

"It's perfect," I replied simply. I took out my wallet and handed my credit card to her. She rang up the ring and I gingerly put it back into the box. I signed the receipt and willed my heart from beating out of my chest. Maggie gave me a hug before I left her store with the ring.

"I already have your wedding rings designed. Come see me when you have a date set," Maggie said with a grin.

"Thank you, Maggie. This is amazing," I said as I gave her a hug. I stepped out of the store and slid into my car. As soon as I got back to our apartment, I placed the ring box into my suitcase that I had begun packing for my trip to Seattle.

xx LC xx

I was honestly waffling about proposing to Bella. I wanted to, desperately. However, I was afraid that she was going to think that it was too soon for us to even think about marriage. After the incident with Jacob, I knew in my heart that I was going to propose to her. The day after the attack, the day that she gave me the greatest gift that I could ever imagine, my decision was solidified. I told her as she slept. I told her that I was going to come through with my promise sooner rather than later. I set my alarm early so I could talk to Charlie before he left for his chemotherapy treatment. I had barely slept when the alarm went off. I silenced it quickly and padded out of the room. I brushed my

## La Cantante

teeth and ran my fingers through my hair. I walked downstairs and found Charlie in the kitchen, sipping some coffee.

"Morning, Edward," Charlie said with a grin.

"Good morning, Charlie," I said as I sat down uncomfortably. "How are you doing today?"

"I'm good, all things considered. I'll be grateful when I'm done with these bloody chemotherapy treatments. I hate them. I feel like such crap afterward," he grumbled.

"I'm sorry about your ordeal," I replied honestly.

"Eh, it's my own fault. I'm the idiot who smoked two packs a day for half of my life. At least they caught it early enough. However, I'm assuming that you are not up at 6:45 in the morning just to talk about my lung cancer," Charlie said with a wink.

"No, sir. In light of everything that's happened, I wanted to talk to you about my intentions toward Bella," I said as shifted in my seat.

"You already have my blessing, Edward. You are a good man, with a strong heart and a level head. You love my stubborn little girl and make her happy and safe," Charlie replied. "You had my blessing when I called you her husband at the hospital."

I blinked a few times. "So, I have your permission to propose to Bella?" I asked.

"You have my permission and my full support. Do you have a plan?" Charlie asked.

"It's clichéd but I'm going to do it at midnight on New Year's Eve," I responded. "Do you want to see the ring?"

"Hell, yeah!" Charlie boomed.

*So, that's where Emmett gets his boisterousness from. I would never have guessed that.*

"I'll be right back," I said as I darted out of the kitchen. I went back into Bella's bedroom where she still sleeping peacefully. I reached into the bottom of my suitcase and pulled out the ring box. I looked at Bella again before I slipped out of the bedroom. I skipped down the stairs and went back into the kitchen. I opened up the ring box and placed it in front of Charlie. He whistled lowly and raised his brows.

"That is some ring, Edward. How can you afford something like this? You're not a kid that's related to mob are you?" he asked warily.

"No, Charlie. My mom and uncle were both from money. When my mom died, she left her fortune to me. I got a chunk when I turned 18 for my education. However, my birth father is paying for my schooling and the money that I got out on my 18th birthday has been sitting in a bank account. I did have to cash in a bit of my trust to buy the ring, but I want nothing but the best for Bella."

"If you don't mind me asking, how much of a trust are you getting?" Charlie questioned.

"I'll get \$1 million on my 21st birthday and approximately the same amount every year until I turn 35. Then the remainder of my trust is released. I'll be getting approximately \$30 million by the time I turn 35," I said, reaching for the engagement ring.

"Holy shit, Edward," Charlie breathed.

"So, I have no problem affording a ring like this," I explained as I looked at Bella's ring.

"Yes, you can. At least I know that my girl will be taken care of. However, don't take offense to this, but you don't act like you have money," Charlie said

with a smirk.

"What? Snotty and like my shit doesn't stink?" I snorted.

"Yeah. I had a girlfriend before I dated Renee who came from money and her parents treated me like I was the scum of the earth because I didn't have money," Charlie laughed.

"My mom and my adoptive parents always taught me not to flaunt my money. I don't like the fact that I have it. Even though I knew I had millions in the bank, I still worked over the summers during high school. I also don't buy everything in sight. That's my sister Alice. She's insane with money. I'm much more frugal. Let's just say that I'm down to earth about the whole thing and don't want to come off as 'better than everyone' because I'm rich."

"You definitely don't," Charlie replied. He checked his watch and grimaced. "Crap. I got to go. I'll see you later, son. Wish me luck."

"Good luck, Charlie. I hope things go well. Have fun with that central line," I said with a frown.

"Central line?" he asked.

I tapped my chest where they put my mom's catheter from when she had the few treatments. "Oh, right. That's what that's called. How do you know that?"

"My mom died of ovarian cancer and she went through a few chemotherapy treatments before they decided that she was too sick. We just made her as comfortable as possible so she could enjoy her last few months," I responded sadly.

"I'm sorry about your mom, Edward. If she was anything like you, she was probably a very special woman," Charlie said as he clapped my shoulder.

"She was. Almost as special as my Bella," I said with a smile. "See you later, Charlie."

## La Cantante

"Bye, Edward." Charlie grabbed his jacket and his keys and walked out the door with a wave. Out in the driveway was dark blue truck with a woman behind the wheel. Charlie got in and he leaned over to kiss her cheek. She rubbed his face and backed out of the driveway. I smiled and headed back upstairs to get some much needed sleep.

xx LC xx

The days following Bella's attack were lazy ones. I spent my time waiting on her hand and foot. She was hating every minute of it, saying that she was perfectly capable of making a sandwich, getting her laptop and answering the phone. The only time she truly relied on me was when she needed to get dressed or when she showered. She was still struggling with washing her hair and putting her clothes on with her collarbone injury. Her wrist was getting better and she was not wearing the brace unless it was hurting. The swelling had gone down considerably and she was able to put her promise ring back on her left hand. That made me smile as I knew that when I proposed to her on New Year's Eve, her ring would fit her finger.

For New Year's Eve, I had planned on taking her to the Fairmount Olympic Hotel and having dinner at the Seattle Space Needle at nine and then ringing in the new year on the observation deck of the Space Needle. It was corny, but I loved it. I knew that couldn't do all that much physically, but I had arranged to get the suite at the Fairmount and had worked with a local florist to adorn the room with dozens of purple, white and pink roses for when we arrived.

Bella was not looking forward to New Years as she was still covered in bruises, both physical and emotional. Her face was still a bit battered, but the swelling had decreased. She was able to put in her contacts again. She just had some sickly looking green bruises on her cheeks and around her neck. The injuries on her torso were a bit more substantial and had not healed as much. They were still big and looked very painful.

However, we had received some good news regarding Charlie. The mayor wanted him to return as the chief of the Forks Police Department. He also said that he wanted Bella, Emmett and I to file suit against Chief Bailey for

## La Cantante

incompetence. Charlie informed the mayor of his medical condition and he said that he would be willing to wait until Charlie was healed before he could return. He wouldn't be on active duty, but would run the department. Charlie smiled and agreed that pending his medical status, he'd be happy to come back.

Also, Rosalie had contacted Emmett and told him that she was flying out to visit him for New Year's Eve. She was coming out on the 30th. We invited them to come with us to dinner at the Space Needle. I told Emmett my plan and he said that I should propose in private and then we would meet up later. I agreed with his wisdom and he congratulated me.

Charlie drove us out to Seattle on the 30th, checking into the hotel before we went to get Rosalie. I had rented a car for our time in Seattle. We didn't want to leave Charlie without his car and didn't want to take the rust bucket. I ended up getting a large SUV with all the bells and whistles. They didn't want to rent me the car, as I was under the age of 25, but when I waved my black credit card, they happily gave me a set of keys. It's amazing what money can do. I hate it, but sometimes it's necessary.

Bella was excited to see Rosalie. However, she was also fearful of Rose's reaction to her injuries. She had spoken to Rose after the attack. Rose had offered words of wisdom and support, as she went to a similar ordeal when she got raped by her ex-boyfriend.

I drove the car to the airport and parked in the parking garage. We all got out and went to the baggage claim to wait for Rose. Emmett was jumping out his skin. I chuckled and asked Bella if she reacted like that while she waiting for me. She said that she was worse. I cupped her chin and caressed her soft lips, brushing a wayward hair off her face.

Out of the corner of my eye, Emmett broke into a sprint and ran off. Bella and I looked at where he ran off to and saw the reunion with Rosalie. They were a tangle of arms and legs as they reunited. A few travelers looked at them with disgust. Bella leaned closer to me and wrapped her arm around my waist. I held her close and kissed her forehead. "Our reunion was much better," I murmured against her skin.

## La Cantante

"We didn't look like we were humping each other in public like Em and Rose. Sheesh, get a room," Bella giggled.

Emmett and Rosalie finally broke apart and walked over to us, hand in hand. Rose gave Bella a tender hug, giving her a knowing smile. Rose then gave me a hug. Afterward, we grabbed Rose's bag and headed to the hotel, depositing her suitcases into Emmett and Rose's room. We went out to a late lunch before doing some touristy things. We all decided to go out to lunch near Pike's Market. We then wandered around. I was in awe of the fish throwers. Bella took me to the first Starbucks and it was cool. Like geeks, we took pictures in front of the famous coffee shop. We headed back to the hotel after a few hours and went to bed early.

Little did Rose and Bella know of a surprise that Emmett and I arranged for them. We scheduled some spa time at the hotel. I knew that Bella needed some pampering. I scheduled a manicure, pedicure and haircut. Emmett scheduled a manicure, pedicure and massage for Rose. We also arranged for them to get their makeup done by the artist on staff. As they were getting 'spa-ed' up, I was going to work with the florist in turning our suite into a rose garden. Emmett was going to run a few errands. I set the alarm for ten and curled up next to an already sleeping Bella.

I could not wait until tomorrow. I'll ask Bella to be my forever. To be my wife. My future. My life. As sleep came to me, I smiled and dreamed of the future and all the good things in store for us. I would no longer live my life in fear as long as I had my love, my singer, by my side.

**A/N: Cliched with the proposal? What do you think? Leave me some love/hate/comments. They are like getting an awesome engagement ring from Edward.**



# New Years Eve

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 51: New Year's Eve

### BPOV

I was slowly healing. I felt much better. My body was still sore, but I was not in a tremendous amount of pain. Thank God. I was hoping that I would feel good enough to ring in the New Year with Edward properly. We probably couldn't do any strange, random positions, but I missed feeling him inside me. I missed his touch, his sexy voice, and the look on his face when he came, the way he made my body feel.

*Fuck, I'm horny. Damn you, Jacob.*

After picking up Rosalie, we went to Pike's Market for lunch and roaming around. We acted like idiots in front of the first Starbucks, taking pictures. After a few hours, we headed back to the hotel. I was surprised the Edward had been able to book a room, let alone the Cascade SUITE at the Fairmount Olympic on New Year's Eve. We went to sleep after our afternoon in Pike's Market. I was curled up against Edward's chest, being careful of my injured arm. His strong arms were encasing me in an Edward blanket. I never felt more happy or more safe than in his arms or in his presence. I fell into a deep sleep, after kissing Edward's newest tattoo above his heart: the beautiful swan.

xx LC xx

*" Happy New Year, Bella," Edward crooned as he dipped his head to kiss my lips.*

## La Cantante

*"Happy New Year, Edward. I'm so happy that I got to ring in the new year with you," I responded, eagerly accepting his kiss.*

*"I want to start the new year off right, Bella," Edward said nervously. He dropped to one knee and held my hand. "Bella, I love you with all that I am. Would you do me the extraordinary honor of becoming my wife? Will you marry me?"*

*"Oh, Edward! Of course, I'll marry you," I squealed. Edward pulled a box out of his pocket and slipped a gorgeous ring onto my finger. He stood up and gathered me into his arms, pressing kisses on my cheeks, lips and face. We stayed wrapped in our embrace for an immeasurable amount of time. Edward pulled away and I looked up at his face.*

*When I saw his face, I pulled away. His handsome features had contorted into Jacob's spiteful, hateful glare. His warm embrace turned into Jacob's hands snapping my arms in two. "You're nothing, you bitch. You'll always come back to me. He's only with you because you're easy, spreading your legs for the first guy since you left me. Fucking bitch. Stupid slut. You're nothing!"*

"Bella! Bella, love, wake up!" Edward cried.

I blinked and looked at a very anxious Edward. I pulled my knees to my chest and began crying, my body shaking with hysterical sobs. "Why won't he leave me alone?"

"Jacob?" Edward asked.

I nodded and my crying continued. "He's gone but he still assaults my dreams. Edward, when will everything be okay?"

"I don't know, baby, but know that I'm always going to be with you. I'll do everything in my power to protect you and to love you," he said as he caressed my face. "Do you want your meds?"

"Please, Edward. I'm so sorry that I'm so fucked up," I mumbled dejectedly.

## La Cantante

Edward gave me a pointed glare and hissed. "Bella, you are not 'fucked up.' Jacob is the fuck up. Not you. You are wonderful."

"If I'm so wonderful, why do I need medication to keep me sane?" I grumbled.

"You don't need it to keep you sane, it just assists you in difficult situations. Bella, I'm going to tell you something that no one, I mean NO ONE in my family knows," Edward said.

"What?" I asked.

"About a year after my mom died, I tried killing myself. I was so depressed because I was abandoned by my dad and my mom being taken from me so unfairly. Keep in mind, I was ten and wasn't really thinking straight. It was not a very serious attempt, but it was still an attempt. If I had medication, I probably would not have tried to hurt myself," Edward said.

"What did you do?" I questioned.

He flipped his hand over and pointed to the small scar on his wrist. "I half-heartedly cut my wrist with a dull steak knife. I only broke the skin and bled very little. However, I wanted the pain to stop and I figured killing myself would do just that. But then I thought about Carlisle and Esme and the pain it would cause if I had died. I thought about Alice. I couldn't hurt them by doing that," Edward said with a small smile. "Now, ten years later, I would never have met you if I had gone through with it."

"Did your family suspect anything?"

"I think so. After that, I was brought to a child psychologist who specialized in children who lost their parents. She helped me tremendously. I owe her everything. I still keep in touch with her. I actually spoke with her over the break. I told her about you and how you complete me," Edward said as he kissed my forehead.

## La Cantante

I yawned and wiped my eyes. "I'm sorry Edward that you were in so much pain as a child," I said as I ran my right hand through his thick hair. "Just know that I will always be there for you. I love you and I appreciate everything that you've done for me since Jacob's attack."

"I'd do anything for you, beautiful. Absolutely anything," Edward said, capturing my hand and kissing my palm. "Let's try and go back to sleep. It's going to be a late night tomorrow, in more ways than two," Edward laughed, wagging his brows. "I've missed *you*."

"Me too, Edward. Me too," I responded. Edward lay back down, pulling me to his chest. He cupped my chin and gently kissed my lips, humming against my mouth. He pulled away and held me tightly against his chest. He quietly hummed my lullaby and I eventually drifted back off to sleep.

I woke up the next morning with Edward pressing feather light kisses to my neck and cheeks. "Wake up, beautiful. I have a surprise for you," he sang, his green eyes dancing. "Let's get you showered."

I groaned and pulled the pillow over my face. Edward chuckled and dragged the blankets off the bed. I curled up and threw the pillow at his head, missing terribly. Edward then bent down and picked me up bridal style. "Edward, put me down! You'll hurt yourself. Remember, you have hairline fractures in your ribs," I admonished as I tried to get out of his hold.

"Bella, I'm fine," Edward said as he rolled his eyes. He carried me to the bathroom where he had drawn a bath. There was a few candles lit and the room was scented with lavender and vanilla. Edward carefully removed my sling and lifted my t-shirt off my body. I moved my hands to my pajama pants, but Edward tsked me. He hooked his thumbs on both the pants and my panties, pulling them down my legs. He picked me up again and gently placed me into the fragrant water. Edward had already taken off his shirt and eased off his boxers. He slid into the tub behind me, pulling me to his chest. He lightly ran his fingers across my skin, causing it to ignite. My head fell back against his shoulder and I moaned quietly. "I have plans for us for later. However, I just wanted to spend some quality time with my girl."

## La Cantante

We spent a half hour in the tub, taking turns in washing each other. Or rather Edward washing me. I was still not allowed to raise my arm above my head. It was better, but I didn't want to reinjure it. We got out of the tub, all pruny and clean. Edward helped dress me in a pair of jeans and a sweater. I was putting on my make up when I heard a knock on the door. Edward jogged to the door and ushered in the bellhop with breakfast. Edward slipped him some money and began laying out the food onto the table in the suite. "Breakfast is served, my love," Edward said with a flourish.

I giggled and sat down at the table. "Thank you, Edward. So, what's the surprise you have planned for me?"

"Well, Emmett and I both decided to give you and Rosalie a spa day. You are scheduled for a manicure, pedicure, haircut and you're getting your make up done for dinner tonight. Rose is also getting a manicure and pedicure, in addition to a massage. I wanted to get that for you but with your injuries decided against it."

"Edward, thank you. My hands and feet have been looking and feeling raggedy. I don't deserve you, handsome."

"Yes, you do, Bella. You deserve the best," Edward said as he sat next to me. "Eat up, beautiful. You're appointments start in an hour."

We ate breakfast and watched some television. There was another knock on the door and I opened it up. Emmett and Rosalie walked in. Emmett had a huge shit-eating grin on his face. Rosalie had a look of euphoria on hers.

*They so did it. Must talk to Rosalie.*

We chatted until the guys escorted us to the spa in the hotel. Edward gave me a heated kiss and said that he would see me later. Rose and I were ushered into the spa and into the changing room. I wasn't changing, but Rose was getting into a robe. She was going to get her massage first as I was getting my hair cut and blown out. 'Red' did a fabulous job on my hair. He added some long layers and bangs that brushed over my brows. He then blew out my hair and curled it

## La Cantante

lightly with a large barreled curling iron. After he finished my hair, he did some wax work on my brows and gave me some pointers on covering the bruises. I mentioned that I was getting my make up done today and he smiled. Red led me to get my manicure and pedicure. I crawled up into the large chair and rolled up my jeans. I put my feet into the warm, bubbling water and relaxed as my feet were massaged.

Rosalie climbed into the chair next to me, "My muscles are like jello. I officially love getting massages," she gushed.

"I wish I could have had one, but Dr. Cullen insisted that I not get one. I'm still too bruised up," I replied with a grimace.

"Fucking, Jacob," Rose seethed. "If I ever see that mongrel, his balls are being removed with a rusty spoon."

"That is a visual I didn't need to have," I laughed. "However, enough about the asshat. Tell me about you and Emmett."

"Is it that noticeable?" Rose asked, embarrassed.

"Rose, you're practically fucking glowing," I mused.

"Shit."

"So...?" I pressed.

"We made love last night for the first time. Emmett lit candles and he made it what my first time should have been. He was tender, loving and perfect, Bella. In the one night with him, all of my wounds from Royce were healed."

"Rosalie, I'm so happy for you. You and Emmett are a wonderful couple. I love you both," I said with a wistful smile.

"I love you, too Bella. You are like a sister to me," Rose said with a watery smile.

## La Cantante

"Hopefully, you'll become my sister, Rosalie. With the way Emmett swooned over you during break, I wouldn't be surprised if he proposed tonight," I teased.

"Yeah, right. We've only been dating for like a month. If anyone is getting engaged, it'll be you. Edward is *ready* for you to be his wife," Rosalie said with a smirk.

"No way," I said quickly.

"We'll see. I have a feeling," Rose responded cryptically.

"Okay, 'Alice,'" I giggled.

"What, the sprite is rubbing off on me!"

When our manicures and pedicures were complete, we were led into a bright room. Both of us got our makeup professionally applied for the events of this evening. The makeup artist who worked on me successfully covered my bruises and gave me some of the makeup for touch ups during the night. As the makeup artists worked on our faces, I received a text from Edward.

*I dropped off your dress in Rosalie's room. If you don't mind getting ready there, I'm doing something in our room. Don't worry it's all good :) - E*

*What are you planning, Cullen? - B*

*You'll see, beautiful. Love you - E*

*Love you too, Captain Cryptic. - B*

We headed up to Rosalie's room to go get ready for our New Years Eve plans. Our dresses were hung in the closet of her room. My dress was a black wrap dress that had a fuller skirt and 3/4 sleeves. I decided to use blue as the accent color so I could wear my jewelry: my promise ring, sapphire earrings and sapphire pendant. I decided to wear a pair of black ballet flats as I was still unsure on my feet. Rose gave me grief but relented when wiggled my arm in

## La Cantante

the sling. Rose admonished me and asked me not to wear the sling. I hemmed and hawed, but decided to not wear it. However, I did bring it in case my injury started hurting. Rose's dress was a deep shade of fuchsia. It was a halter top style dress with a black belt and an a-line skirt. She wore a pair of matte metallic heels and carried a matching purse. She looked like a model.

As we were getting dressed and touching up our makeup, Rose received a text from Emmett. He told us to head up to my room when we were all 'poofed.' I grabbed my deep sapphire blue clutch and blue wrap as Rose grabbed her black and silver wrap from the bed. We got on the elevator and went up to the suite. I used my keycard to open the door. Our noses were assaulted by the most wonderful scent. We both walked in slowly and the room was decorated in dozens of roses in varying shades of white, purple and pink. In the center of the room stood Emmett and Edward. Emmett was wearing a pair of black dress pants, black dress shirt and a silver grey tie. He was holding a white rose in his hands. Edward was wearing a black suit with a blue dress shirt and a black tie. In his hands, he held a pink rose.

I couldn't put my finger on it, but Edward looked extremely nervous. He was fidgety and he had a sheen of sweat adorning his forehead. As we walked in, he had a look of panic on his face, but that quickly disappeared when he saw Rose and I. Edward's face broke into a huge grin and moved to greet me at the door. He held out the rose, "You look breathtakingly gorgeous, Bella," he breathed. He leaned down and brushed his lips along the side of my mouth.

"Thank you, Edward. You look so handsome," I replied, wrapping my arms around his waist. I inhaled his delicious scent, a combination of his body wash, cologne and something that was inherently Edward. He nuzzled my neck, breathing in deeply as well. "We should get going. I arranged for a limo to take us to the Space Needle. I didn't want to drive with all of the drunk crazies. Shall we?"

I nodded and laced my fingers through his. Edward's brow furrowed, "Where's your sling?"



## La Cantante

I removed my wrap and showed him that I had it hidden underneath the wrap. "I've been feeling pretty good. I brought it if I start hurting, but I decided not to wear it. I'll be fine, Edward."

He arched a thick brow and shook his head. Edward laid his hand on the small of my back and we headed out of the suite. Emmett and Rosalie followed us, their fingers intertwined together. We rode the elevator in a comfortable silence. Emmett ran out to see if the limo had arrived as we waited in the lobby of the hotel. I rested my head against Edward's strong chest, enjoying our time together. Emmett returned and we walked out to the white stretch limousine. Emmett and Rosalie got in first. Edward helped me into the car and he gracefully slid in. The driver closed the door and drove to the iconic Seattle Space Needle.

About ten minutes later, we pulled up to the Space Needle. The driver darted out and open the doors for us. Edward got out first and assisted me in exiting the car. He then turned and helped out Rosalie, like the consummate gentleman that he is. After getting out of the limo, Edward spoke to the driver. They exchanged cell phone numbers and the limo drove off. We walked to the entrance to Space Needle. Edward spoke to the attendant at the elevator, informing her of our reservations for the evening. She grinned and led us to the lift. She pressed a number and we headed up the Space Needle to Sky City, the upscale restaurant atop the iconic monument.

We were ushered to a table near one of the windows. The Sky City restaurant slowly rotated high above the Emerald City. Rosalie and I were settled near the windows and the guys were closer to the aisle. A young waiter approached our table. "Good evening and Happy New Year. My name is Thomas. Welcome to Sky City. Is this the first you've dined with us?"

We all nodded as Thomas handed us the menus. "Can I get you all something to drink?"

Rose and I both ordered water, Emmett ordered some beer and Edward got a Coke. Thomas informed us that we would be receiving a complimentary flute of champagne near midnight in honor of the New Year's holiday. Thomas

## La Cantante

scurried off to get our drinks. He returned shortly and distributed the beverages. "Are you ready to order or do you need a few moments?"

"Can we get some time, please?" Edward asked politely.

"Of course. I'll return in a little bit," Thomas replied with a warm smile.

We all turned to the menus and figured out what we wanted to eat. Thomas had come back and we told him our orders. I decided on Pecan Crusted Artisan Goat Cheese for an appetizer, and Grilled Wild King Salmon for dinner. Edward was going to get a cup of Seattle Clam and Corn Chowder and Slow-Braised Northwest Grown Beef Shortribs. Rosalie decided on the Baby Spinach Salad and Seasonable Vegetable Gateau. Emmett was getting Dungeness Crab Cakes for an appetizer, the clam chowder and a 12oz USDA Prime Double R Ranch Beef New York Strip Steak.

After Thomas left, Emmett raised his beer and proposed a toast, "To a fantastic New Year, with new friends, new loves and new beginnings." We all raised our glasses and clinked them together. Edward turned to me and caressed my cheek, kissing my lips.

"So, Edward, how was your Christmas?" Rosalie asked.

"It was good. Santa and his elf was very generous this year," Edward laughed.

"What did Alice get you?" Rosalie giggled.

"Alice got me a Fender Electric Guitar and a new amp. My electric guitar was on its last limbs. I've had to rework the wiring more times than I care to count," Edward admitted. "Alice also offered to design our costumes for Breaking Midnight. She has a 'feeling' about our gig at Eclipse. She wants us to be well-dressed and ready for anything. My parents got me a new laptop, a Macbook Pro with all the bells and whistles and the latest edition of Finale."

"What did Bella get you?" Rosalie questioned.

## La Cantante

I blushed and squeezed Edward's knee under the table. "The best present ever."

"Yeah, Eddie, I want to hear about she gave you the present," Emmett gushed.

"Well, you and Charlie were about as subtle as Mack truck. Going to Port Angeles for pizza?" I teased.

"Hey, it worked! Eddie, tell us the story," Emmett pressed.

"It happened the day after Jacob had attacked Bella. Emmett and Charlie left the house to go get the 'pizza.' Bella had already given me a watch," Edward replied as he pulled up his sleeve, revealing the metal watch on his slender wrist. "However, she got me something else. I honestly didn't need anything from her. You're the best thing that I have in my life."

"Edward, you say the sweetest things," Rosalie sighed. "Emmett, take a few pointers from Edward. You are good at the sweet nothings but Edward is the master."

"I will teach you, young padawan," Edward laughed.

"I am a willing pupil, Master," Emmett said reverently.

"You two are dorks," I snorted.

"Back to the present to end all presents," Edward interjected.

Thomas had returned and distributed our appetizers. We all smiled as the delicious food was placed in front of us. He asked if we needed anything. I asked for a Diet Coke and a refill of my water. He scampered away and returned with my request.

"Okay, enough interruptions," Rosalie chided. "Continue, Edward."

"So, Bella told me that she had another present for me for Christmas. She got up and picked up a box from underneath the tree and handed it to me. I

## La Cantante

unwrapped the gift and I was so surprised at what I saw. On the top of the box was the Cullen Crest and several pictures from my childhood. I looked at my beautiful girl and I was in awe of what she had done."

"What was it, Bella?" Rose asked.

"I asked Esme to give me the videos and pictures from Edward's time with his mom. I had the videos and pictures transferred to DVD with music. A friend of mine from high school owns a business that specializes in that type of project."

"I was floored. Shocked. Happy. Elated. I can't even come up with anymore emotions to describe how I felt. This was the greatest thing anyone had ever done for me. I had watched the videos until our VCR broke. We never replaced it. Now, Bella has given me my memories back, only enhanced with the pictures and music that Bella chose. I was so touched," Edward sniffled. "I love you, Bella."

"I love you more, Edward," I breathed, kissing his soft lips.

"Wow, Bella. That is the present to end all presents," Rosalie breathed.

"I also had a set of DVDs made for Carlisle and Esme. Edward's mother was Carlisle's sister and Esme's best friend. They would also enjoy them," I explained. "How about you, Rose? How was your Christmas?"

"Quiet. My parents and I spent the Christmas holiday at an upscale resort in Vermont. I didn't want to go, but I wanted to spend time with my family," Rose replied with a sad smile.

"Why Vermont?" Emmett asked.

"We avoided a family reunion of sorts with my grandparents on my father's side. They don't exactly approve of my mother. My parents got married after I was born and my dad's parents were very religious and not happy with their decision of having a child out of wedlock," Rose explained.

## La Cantante

Thomas returned and cleared our appetizer dishes. Rose quickly changed subjects from her family and got very quiet. Emmett gently rubbed her shoulders and she put her head on his bicep. The rest of dinner was spent with polite, but humorous conversation. Emmett was making almost obscene sounds as he ate his steak. Edward and I shared a bemused look. We all ordered desserts and they were brought out quickly. We enjoyed the decadent desserts. Thomas returned with the bill and four flutes of champagne. He told us that the other patrons of the restaurant were heading out to the observation level to ring in the New Year.

Without even realizing it, we had been at Sky City for nearly two and half hours. It was nearly midnight.

Edward paid for dinner, much to Emmett's chagrin. Edward hadn't gotten Emmett or Rosalie a present for Christmas and he insisted that he pay for them. We gathered our things and headed up to the observation level. Rose and Emmett wandered off to the far end of the observatory. Edward led me outside. I shivered and Edward slipped his suit coat around my shoulders. I held my glass of champagne and took several sips.

"Bella, you know that I love you, right?" Edward said nervously.

"Of course, I do, Edward. I love you so much," I replied, wrapping my arms around his waist.

"Bella, in the time that I've known you, you've brought me so much happiness. You are my best friend, my lover and my soul mate. I can't imagine not spending a moment away from you," Edward said reverently.

"I feel the same way, Edward," I whispered, resting my hands on his chest.

I faintly heard the booming sounds of fireworks. Edward and I looked out over Puget Sound and saw a brilliant display over the water. "It's the New Year. I want to start it off right."

"What are you talking about, Edward?" I asked, quirkling a brow.

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Edward reached into his pocket of his dress pants and pulled something out. He gracefully dropped to one knee. "Isabella Marie Swan, you are my life. I intend to spend the rest of my existence loving you, cherishing you and protecting you. Would you do me the honor of being my partner, my singer, my wife?" Edward whispered.

He opened a small box and gingerly held it out to me. My eyes glistened and tears spilled onto my cheeks. I brought my hand to my chest to calm my breathing and to stop my heart from pounding out of my chest. Was this too soon? Was I ready to be Edward's wife? I'm only nineteen. However, I looked at my love and saw the hope in his features, the love in his eyes and I knew.

"Yes."

"Yes?"

"Yes, I'll marry you. Edward," I breathed. Edward took out the ring and slid off my promise ring. I took it from his fingers and slipped it on my right hand. Edward placed the engagement ring on my left hand and placed a reverent kiss to it. He hopped up and wrapped his arms around my waist and fervently kissed my lips.

"I love you, Bella. My fiancée," Edward smiled, his eyes crinkling.

"I love you, too, Edward."

Edward pulled away and shouted at the top of his lungs, "SHE SAID YES! WE'RE GETTING MARRIED!" He let out a whoop and picked me up, swinging me around.

I laughed at his enthusiasm. "Edward, as much as this romantic, I'm freezing," I chattered.

"Oh, right! Me too! Let's go inside and tell Rose and Emmett," Edward gushed. He reached for my hand and led us back into the observatory. When we got inside, we found my brother and Rose. They were sitting on a bench, sharing a

quiet conversation. Emmett looked up when he saw us and his face broke into a huge smile.

"Well?" Emmett asked.

I held up my left hand and wiggled my fingers. Rose screamed and dashed over to me, giving me a huge hug. She grabbed my hand and stared at the ring on my left ring finger. As she looked, I took the opportunity to examine the ring as well. It was breathtaking. It was a platinum setting with round pave diamonds on the shoulders with baguettes closest to the huge oval center stone. The diamond in the middle danced and sparkled on my finger. "Holy shit. That is not a diamond, that is a small planet," Rose breathed. "Congratulations, Bella and Edward!"

"Congratulations, bro! We're truly going to brothers, now," Emmett bellowed. He pulled Edward into a warm embrace, picking him up off the ground. Emmett looked at him fondly before turning to me. "My little sister is growing up. I love you, Isabelly. I'm so happy for you."

"I love you, too, Emmy," I cried. I enfolded my arms around Emmett's massive waist and he kissed the top of my head. "This is going to be the best year, ever."

"It definitely is, my beautiful girl," Edward said as he slipped his arms around my waist. I leaned back against my fiancé's strong chest and relaxed into his arms. "I love you, *il mio cantante*."

"I love you more, Edward," I replied. "Are you guys ready to go?"

Emmett and Rose nodded. Edward sent a text to the limo driver. The driver responded almost immediately saying he was in the parking lot, waiting for us. We headed downstairs to the limo and enjoyed the short ride back to the hotel. Edward paid the driver and we headed into the lobby of the hotel, toward the elevators. Rose and Emmett got off on their floor and said that they would meet us in the morning for breakfast. The elevator doors shut and Edward cornered me, pushing me against the wall of the elevator. His eyes were dark

and his lips crashed onto mine. We kissed passionately until we reached our floor. When the doors opened, Edward picked me up and carried me to our room. I took out the keycard and swiped it when we got to the door and we fell into the beautiful suite.

Edward carried me to the bedroom and lay me gently on the bed. He held up one finger and picked up a lighter from the dresser. He quickly lighted several candles that were in the room and turned off the overhead lights. As he moved around the room, I slipped off my shoes and put my purse and wrap on the bench at the edge of the bed. Edward crawled up the bed and I leaned back as he hovered over my body. My chest was heaving and I could feel his excitement.

"I need you, my beautiful girl," Edward stated. His eyes pleaded with me. "Please say that we can be together?"

Not trusting my voice, I nodded, reaching up to pull his face to mine. He tenderly caressed my lips with his and brushed his fingertips along my cheeks and face. His tongue lightly traced my bottom lip and I moaned. As my mouth opened, Edward's tongue entered my mouth and moved languidly with mine. He rolled us so he was on his back and I was straddling his waist. I gently pulled on his tie and tossed it on the floor. My fingers deftly moved to the buttons of his dress shirt and revealed his perfectly muscled chest. As I worked, I marveled at the ring on my left hand and that I was truly his. Edward picked up my left hand and pressed a kiss above my engagement ring and flipped my hand over and kissed my palm.

Edward sat up and I pushed the dress shirt off his shoulders. I threw it on the floor, along with his tie. Edward reached for the tie from my dress and tugged. The dress opened and he unwrapped me like a present. My body was still bruised, but not overly so. I still had a dark mark on my left collarbone and my ribs were multicolored, but they were fading. Edward hissed as he saw my injuries. I gently cupped his chin. "I'm fine, Edward. You told me that the injuries heal. This is only temporary."



## La Cantante

His eyes flashed with anger but quickly softened. He respectfully reached up to my face and ran his fingers across my cheekbones, down my jaw, along my neck and caressing my arms. "I know, love. However, it still pains me to see you like this. You are perfect and seeing these bruises and knowing how you got them..."

I put my fingers to his lips. "Jacob is gone and never coming back. I'm with you and will always be with you. I have this," I said, wiggling my engagement ring in his face, "that proves it. I love only you."

Edward looked at me for an immeasurable amount of time, searching my face and my eyes for something. When he found it, he kissed me and finished removing my dress. He put it on the floor with his shirt and tie. I was still straddling Edward's legs and I could feel him get harder. I reached for his buckle and he moved my hands away. "Tonight is all about you, Bella. I want to show you how much I love you. I want to worship your body and make you feel cherished."

Edward reached behind me and tenderly removed my black satin bra. His eyes looked at me lovingly as he palmed the mounds on my chest. He leaned forward and peppered kissed along my neck, moving down to my breasts. He pulled one of them into his mouth, gently flicking the nipple with his hot tongue. I arched my back at his sensual touch. One of his hands remained on my other breast and his other arm wrapped around my waist. He flipped us so he was hovering my body, still kissing my chest. He moved his mouth and tongue down my body and licked along the waistband of my black panties.

Edward sat back and quickly divested himself of his dress pants. He then leaned down and kissed me chastely on my lips. He still didn't put any of his weight on my body, in fear of hurting me. He balanced himself on his elbows and his knees. He pulled away and I whimpered. Edward smirked at me crookedly and he eased himself down my body. He removed my panties and placed them on the floor. Edward pressed a kiss to my tattoo, licking the ink. My hips bucked at the intense sensation. He growled lightly and moved his mouth to my heated core. I spread my lower lips with his fingers and he flicked my clit with his tongue. "You taste so good, Bella. I could live off of you," he

purred.

I moaned and reached my hands to his hair. My fingers weaved themselves into his soft, coppery locks. I encouraged him back between my legs. He chuckled and happily obliged. His tongue teased and licked my clit, bringing me close to my release. When I was almost there, he pulled away and kissed my inner thighs, building my anticipation. "Edward, please."

"Soon, my love," he chastised. With his tongue, he licked my slit and plunged two fingers into me. I screamed and arched my body off the bed. He swirled his tongue around my clit and pumped his fingers into me. My breathing was ragged and my body was begging for the spring to uncoil. Edward gently nibbled on my clit and curled his fingers in my body. He also hummed against my body, causing vibrations to run through me. I fisted the duvet cover and my muscles clenched around Edward's fingers. My eyes were clamped shut as I rode out my intense orgasm. Edward continued his ministrations as I returned to earth. I tugged on Edward's hair when I couldn't take anymore and beckoned him to me. I pulled his face to mine, kissing his lips. I could taste myself on his mouth and on his tongue. I moaned into his mouth and I felt his cock twitch against me. I pulled away and looked into his forest green eyes, "Edward, I need to feel you. Please, baby."

"I don't want to hurt you, beautiful. You're still healing," he said with trepidation. He kissed me and I could feel his erection trapped between our bodies.

"Please, Edward?" I begged.

Edward looked at me and I could see the wheels turning in his head. I reached up with my right hand and gently cupped his cheek. He leaned into my touch and I wiggled my hips. He hissed and kissed me forcefully. He slipped off his boxer shorts and rolled us so he was on his back. I sat back up and positioned myself over his cock. My eyes met his and as I lowered myself down onto him I whispered, "I love you, Edward."

Edward kept his eyes on mine, "I love you more, beautiful girl. You're my whole life." He placed one of his hands on my hips and with the other ran his fingertips along my cheekbone, ghosting over my body. I slowly moved my hips, swiveling them around his legs. Edward's eyes clamped shut and his head was thrown back onto the pillows. "If you keep moving like that, Bella, I'm not going to last long."

I continued my movements, leaning forward to kiss Edward's soft, delectable mouth. He eagerly returned the kiss, fisting his hands into my long hair. I moved up and down on Edward's cock, feeling my body react to him. Every thrust was intensified. In my mind, I knew that he was the only man who make me feel like this. He owned me, body, mind and soul. I was his as he was mine. "Edward, I'm yours. Only yours," I cooed against his mouth. "You're the only one for me. You're mine."

"Bella, baby. I will only love and live for you. For the rest of our lives. I'll be yours as you will be mine," Edward breathed. "I need to feel you come, baby. I want to hear you scream my name."

"Oh, God," I sighed, resting my head against his chest. I sat back up and moved my body above his. His hand reached in between us and he swirled his fingers over my clit. "Oh, Edward. *Edward*...EDWARD," I screamed. My muscles clenched down on his member and I threw my head back in ecstasy. Edward roared as he spilled into me, chanting my name as he pumped into my body. I fell forward, breathing heavily, resting my head on his chest. "Wow."

"Wow is right, beautiful," Edward replied as he kissed my head. I moved my body off of his and sighed as he left me. His eyes glistened and he looked at my face. "I can't believe you said yes. I can't believe I get to keep you forever, Bella."

"Believe it, Edward. I'm yours for the rest of our lives," I replied as I gently kissed his sweet lips. "I'm surprised that you actually proposed, though."

"Why?"

"We've only known each other for a little less than four months," I explained.

"Bella, I knew the first time that we sang together that I was going to marry you. I love you with my whole heart and I will spend the rest of my life making you happy and safe," Edward responded. "I was ready to propose to you when I gave you the promise ring. However, I didn't want to freak you out. Hell, I was freaking myself out. But, I knew. I knew that you were the only woman for me." He smiled and kissed my engagement ring.

I returned his smile and tried to stifle a yawn. He chuckled and pulled down the covers. "You're tired, Bella. We've had a long day and need our sleep. I love you so much."

"I love you, too, Edward," I replied, pressing a kiss to his chest. I nestled close to him and he held me in a warm embrace. He hummed a new melody in my ear until I eventually drifted to sleep in the arms of my fiancé.

**A/N: So...he did it. What do you think? Leave some love! Up next, Bella and Edward's return to New York and his family's reaction to their engagement.**

# Ramblings of a Dark and Twisted Mind

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 52: Ramblings of a Dark and Twisted Mind

### Alternate POV

Ugh, I hurt. I feel like I've been washed out to sea and dragged along the bottom of the ocean. What the fuck? I opened my eyes and looked around. Where was I?

I sat up and noticed I was in a small cabin. I could smell bacon and other food being cooked. I did an inspection of my body and saw cuts and bruises along my torso, hands and legs. I placed my feet on the floor of the room and heaved my body off the bed. I walked to the door and opened it. I moved tentatively into the kitchen where I saw someone cooking breakfast.

I cleared my throat and the chef jumped. She turned around and looked at me. Her face was marred with three gruesome scars on her cheeks. Her long raven hair was pulled in two plaits on either side of her round face. "You're finally up."

"How long was I out?" I asked.

"About two days. We found you on the beach early yesterday morning. We thought you were dead," she explained. "The cops spent a couple of days looking for your body, but didn't find anything. According to the Forks Police Department, you're dead."

## La Cantante

"That's an interesting turn of events," I chuckled darkly. "Where's Sam?"

"Out in the garage. However, I do need to say something. Let her go," she replied.

"I can't," I growled. "She's mine."

"No, she's not. However, it's not worth the fight. Sam is waiting for you. Breakfast will be ready shortly," she replied curtly.

I grunted and slipped on a pair of shoes by the door. I ambled out to the garage and found Sam working on a large truck. "Sam?"

"About fucking time, jackass. You've been asleep for days. What the fuck?" Sam sneered.

"You try jumping off a cliff and into frigidly cold waters and hiding from Forks finest and see how you feel?" I snarled.

"Don't be such a douche. I should have left you on the fucking beach to be caught. Asshole," Sam growled. "Show some appreciation. I am harboring a criminal."

"Thank you, Sam," I replied dryly.

"Fuck you, Jacob. You are an idiot. A total moron," Sam seethed.

"Why is that, Sam?" I countered.

"Give it up. Turn yourself in. Bella is never coming back to you. Get it through your thick skull," Sam replied.

"I will get her back, if it's the last thing I do. Are you going to help me or not?"

"I saved your ass, didn't I?" Sam retorted.

## La Cantante

"Yeah, you did. Here's my plan. I'm dead, at least according to the idiots at the Forks Police Department. So, I need to get back to Emerson University. I'm planning on getting Bella there. No daddy to interfere with any investigation," I fumed.

"What about the brother and boyfriend?" Sam asked.

"Don't worry about them. Here's where I need your help," I began. "I need a car and I need money. I need to go to Emerson and watch Bella. To see her on campus, memorize her schedule, know her routines. When she becomes comfortable, then I'll strike. I'll take her away and make her mine."

"I can get you a car, no big deal. The money may be a bit of a problem. That'll take some time. Let me ask around the rez if anyone has extra cash. How much do you think you'll need?"

"I dunno. A couple grand?" I replied.

"Like I said, it'll take time. Come on, let's get some breakfast. Emily is famous for her blueberry muffins," Sam said.

"Yay! Muffins!" I responded sarcastically. Sam smacked me upside the head and we walked back into their tiny home. Sam, Emily and I sat down to a quiet breakfast. Sam devoured his food and Emily gave me murderous glances. After eating breakfast, I went back into my room and lay down. I was still feeling like shit and I needed to rest. I needed to regain my strength so I could get back my Bella.

*Bella.*

I was drawn to her from the moment I saw her when I was seven. She was so pretty. She had long brown hair, chocolate brown eyes and perfect skin. She was perfect. Clumsy, but perfect. I knew when we played together every summer that I would want to be with her for the rest of my life. When she moved up to Forks permanently, I was so excited, I could finally be with her. However, I couldn't get the nerve to tell her. Our relationship was a bit strained

## La Cantante

until I grew a set and told her. When I did tell her, I expected fireworks, choirs of angels singing, and the whole clichéd scenario. I got a shrug. A fucking shrug.

However, she didn't punch me so we fell into our relationship. Things started off great. We were happy. Or at least, I was. I was with my girl. I tried my damndest to make her happy. I played the sweet, attentive boyfriend. I brought her flowers, took her on romantic dates and did the whole sappy thing. Then, she started doing things that pissed me off. She wouldn't return my phone calls. She would blow me off for *choir rehearsal*. She would hang out with people that I didn't approve of. She would say that she had homework to do. So, I had to change those behaviors.

I started off with small changes. I started by bringing her down. I knew that she was beautiful and intelligent, but I couldn't let her think that. I constantly cut her down until she needed to hear my validation. When I broke her spirit, I began controlling when and who she could go out with. I only allowed her to hang out with me and my friends. Her fucking choir cronies couldn't have her.

She was my soul mate. I knew I was fucking douche to her and she didn't deserve it. Well, maybe she did. If only she would love me back. She never said those three words as long as we were together. She always responded 'You, too.' Never 'I love you, Jacob.' What the fuck? Am I not worthy of love? Am I that hideous? I've had girls fall over me. I've had girls offer themselves to me and I took. I took a lot. God knows *Bella* wasn't offering. Stupid bitch never wanted to have sex with me. I barely got to second base with her. So, I got what I wanted from other sources. It was fucking. Plain and simple. I would find the girl that I wanted, usually someone who looked like Bella and we would fuck. It wasn't for her. It was ALL for me.

I thought I had gotten to her. That was not the case. A year after we started dating, she broke up with me. Saying she had had enough. I was fucking livid. That bitch could not break up with *me*. I was the only one who would love her. I ran off for a bit, trying to clear my head. However, every so often I would return to Bella's home and acted like we were still together. She would push me away and I would leave. I was determined to have her. I finally decided that



## La Cantante

last New Year's Eve would be the time for me to make Bella mine.

I was at a party at Sam's place. I had a few beers. Okay, more than just a few. More like a few cases. Close to midnight, I got into my car and drove to Bella's home. I saw that she was home. The family room lights were on and I saw Bella on the couch reading.

*Always fucking reading. What a nerd.*

I pounded on the door and didn't wait for to open it. I burst through it, smashing the door frame. Bella looked up at me with such fear in eyes. Fear that I had put there.

"I've been patient. I've waited for you. I'm done. You're mine and will always be mine, you bitch," I snarled.

"Jacob! You need to get out of here. If my dad finds you here, he's going to kill you," Bella cried.

"Oh, I'm so worried about gimpy, daddy Swan. He can't do a fucking thing to me. He's weak. Just like you, you stupid whore," I seethed. "You will be mine, whether you like it or not."

"Jacob, don't please! If you say you love me, don't do this," she pleaded.

"If you loved me then I wouldn't have to look for pussy elsewhere. I'd be fucking my *girlfriend*. Not some random sluts. Well, no more. You are going to be mine," I growled. I stomped over to where Bella was cowering. I picked her up by her arms and backhanded her across her face, sending her glasses flying across the room. I pushed her onto the couch and pinned her tiny body with mine. I forcefully began tugging at her clothes. Tears were falling down her cheeks and she was trying to push me away. "Stop fighting it, bitch. Enjoy the pleasure I'm going to give you."

"No, don't," she whimpered. I slapped her again. Her whining needed to stop. She squeaked as my hand made contact with her face. I got most of her shirt

## La Cantante

off and I began kneading my hands on her breasts. I could feel myself become hard as I assault her body. I leaned down and shoved my tongue into her mouth. She squirmed and scratched at my face. I continued to kiss her until she bit down on my tongue. "Fucking whore!" I spat, punching her jaw. "You'll pay for that."

I ripped the bra from her body and moved my hands to her jeans. I faintly heard some jangling at the door and in burst in Daddy.

*Fuck my life.*

He ran toward me and horse collared me, pulling me off Bella. He used a flashlight and pounded me in the back of the head. I fell to my knees and I felt hard metal surround my wrists. He cuffed me. Bastard. My vision was getting hazy and I tried to get up and get back to Bella. I had every intention of finishing what I started. Daddy clocked me again with that damn flashlight and I slumped to the floor. Daddy was on the phone and soon there was flashing lights and sirens. Before I knew it, I was being arrested for underage drinking and driving under the influence. Bella refused to press charges against me.

*Perhaps, there's hope for her yet. She still loves me.*

I spent the next two nights in jail. During those two nights I made the decision that I would finally get Bella. No matter the cost. When I was released from jail, I recruited Seth to help me. He was going to go to college near Bella. He could be my eyes and ears. I also fucked his sister and got her to agree to help me too. In my mind, I had a plan and these two would help me achieve it.

I steered clear of Bella for the rest of the school year. However, right before she left for Emerson, I dropped by, giving her another chance. She flat out refused and I skulked away. As I drove back to LaPush, I called Seth saying that my plan was a go. He would use his photography skills to spy on my Bella.

On the first day of classes, I sent Bella a text. I tried to send her more but they kept getting bounced back to me. That bitch had changed her phone number. I was fuming. I needed to keep in contact with her. When I got the first set of

photos emailed to me from Seth, I finally figured out why. My Bella was in the pictures kissing this red-headed douche that looked like a fucking tool. There was one picture that was intriguing to me. Bella and the tool were walking arm in arm, both looking incredibly happy. In my mind, I saw him dead. I called Seth and told him what I wanted him to do. He was only too happy to comply. He printed out the photos and the photo that intrigued me was defaced. I asked Seth to put a heart around Bella's face saying 'mine' and crossing out the douche's face saying 'dead.' I then asked him to send it to Bella's school address.

Fate would be on my side. My father and I ran into Charlie at The Lodge. Billy and Charlie were talking and Charlie didn't feel me take out his cell phone from his pocket. I looked up Bella's number and did see that it was changed. I quickly memorized it and programmed it into my own phone. I then purchased a pre-paid cell phone and began calling Bella at all random times of the day and night. I never spoke, just breathed. I also recruited Leah, Seth's sister, in sending an email to Bella. However, that was the only time that Leah would help me. She got spooked when the next time she went to send an email to my Bella there were cops all over the internet café that she used.

*Stupid, cowardly bitch.*

I decided that over the Thanksgiving weekend I would pay Bella a visit. I got in my car and drove across the fucking country. When I got there, I saw Bella and the douche get into his fucking car and drive off. I didn't want to follow them. I hung around her dorm and watched. I decided that I needed to do some reconnaissance. I walked up to the dorm and put on my charmer smile and rang some random bell. I said I was a pizza delivery guy and the idiots I had buzzed let me in. I sauntered into the dorm and stopped a pretty blonde girl.

"Hey, I'm surprising my girlfriend for Thanksgiving. Do you know where Bella Swan's room is?" I asked, flashing my pearly whites.

"She's in room 200. You're not Edward, though," she said confused.

"Who's Edward?" I asked with a tight smile.

## La Cantante

"Edward is Bella's boyfriend," she explained. She turned on her heel and scuttled away.

*The douche has a name. Edward. So fitting. Fuck.*

I went up the stairs to the second floor. I got a few stares from some of the girls but I smiled at all of them. I went to the door and knocked. I knew that she was gone but perhaps one of her roommates were there. I waited a few moments and no one answered. I looked around and made sure that there was no one in the hallway. I forced the door open and slipped inside. There were three beds. I didn't know which was Bella's but I could smell her. Her scent enraged me as it was mingled with his. I lost it. I ripped off the bedding off all of the beds, tearing the sheets. I found Bella's guitar and I smashed it in the middle of the room. I found a small stuffed lion on the middle bed. I took out my pocket knife and ripped it to shreds. When the room was sufficiently smashed, I slipped out of the room and walked down the back set of stairs. I sprinted to my car and began my long trek back to LaPush. I tried to push her out of my mind, but failed. She was the object of my fantasies and nightmares.

Things continued this way until Bella's return around Christmas. I watched her from a distance. She was never alone. Her stupid brother was always with her or her father. I couldn't enact my plan to finally get her. I had to wait. The one time that she was alone was when she drove to the airport.

*She's picking up the tool. Fuck my life.*

I couldn't do it if she was with the tool. However, I followed her and waited in the parking garage until she left. An hour later, she and the tool were walking to the car and they drove off back to Forks. About halfway to Forks, Bella pulled off and drove to a campground. I followed her and parked the car about a half mile away from her car. I stealthily moved to where she was parked and I saw the two of them in the backseat. Clothes were being removed and I could see them fucking. That should be me. Not him. I punched a tree and threw several rocks before I ran back to my car. I waited until they drove off and followed them all the way back to Forks.

## La Cantante

Bella pulled into the driveway and I watched. About fifteen minutes later, my Bella exited the house and slid back into the car. No one followed her. Now was my chance. I drove behind her and trailed her to the grocery store. I got out of the car and wanted to grab her then. However, she was on alert and I eased off. I waited until she was done with whatever shopping she needed to get done. About ten minutes later, Bella exited the store with a bag. She was distracted. I slinked behind her and pushed her hard. I then reared back with a baseball bat that I had stashed in my car and hit her in the back of the head. Her groceries, purse and phone scattered in the parking lot and she fell to her knees and slumped to the ground. I scooped her up and threw her into the car and sped off to LaPush.

I hastily parked the car on the side of the road and picked her up out of the car. I walked swiftly to the cliffs where we hung out when we dated. I put her on the ground and smacked her face several times, trying to rouse her. She wouldn't budge. I then pinched her collarbone and I felt a snap between my fingers and her eyes shot open. She screamed and tried to move away. I grabbed her foot and glared at her. Tears fell down her cheeks and she shrank back.

"What do you want?" she whispered.

"You know what I want, Bella," I seethed. "I want you."

"Jacob, no," she cried.

I smacked her, hard across the cheek. She yelped. I kicked her in the ribs and she screamed. "You are doing this. You are causing yourself to get hurt. If you would just choose me, I would stop, bitch."

Bella curled up and began sobbing. I picked her up by her collar and wrapped my hands around her neck. I began squeezing. Bella squirmed and scratched at my hands. "Jake," she rasped. I released and pushed her against a large rock. She screamed again.

## La Cantante

"You are such a fucking slut, Bella. You fucked him in the car. You whore," I spat, smacking her. "You're nothing but a worthless slut, tramp and bitch. You're lucky that I'm willing to take you back. Most men wouldn't want a ruined woman. That's what you are. Ruined. He fucked you and not he's done with you. You're nothing. Absolutely nothing, bitch."

I stepped back and kicked Bella in the ribs. She cried out in pain. "Jacob, stop, please."

"I'll stop when you say you'll be with me forever, Bella. If I can't have you, then no one can," I snarled. "You have a choice. Me or the water."

"I'll take the water, thank you very much," she seethed.

*Wrong answer, bitch.*

"Bitch. You will be mine. If you won't come to me willingly, I'll take what I want by force," I growled. I picked her up and my hands moved to her jeans.

"Jacob, NO! I don't want this! Please!" she cried. I would not stop until I had had her. I needed to bury my cock into her to claim her as mine. I tore at her jacket, ripping it open and I clamped my hands around her tiny arms. I leaned down and shoved my tongue into her mouth. She squirmed and I was done. I picked up her left hand and saw something glitter on her finger.

*She's ENGAGED? I don't fucking think so.*

I took her wrist and I twisted it forcefully. She screamed in agony. I moved in again to finish what I started but I was thwarted by a weight on my back. I turned my head and saw that it was Bella's brother, Emmett. I bucked him off my back and quickly turned to face him. I held up my hands and took a few swipes. Emmett's fist connected with my jaw and he swiped his leg underneath mine, causing me to fall. We circled on the cliff until Emmett was close to the edge. Perfect. I lunged for him and Emmett let out a scream. We struggled until I felt another person on my back. They were much lighter, but their arms locked around my neck forcefully. I roared and reached behind me, easily

flipping the other person over my shoulders. It was the tool. He hopped up and he and Emmett were with their backs against the forest. My back was to the edge of the cliff.

*Fuck.*

"She's mine fucker. She'll always be mine," I sneered at the douche.

"I don't think so, Jacob," the tool responded. I roared and moved to attack the tool. My attack was stopped when I heard the cops.

"Freeze, Black!"

*Fuck my life.*

I panicked and I didn't know what to do. I looked back at the douche and narrowed my eyes. I needed to get out of here. It was either be arrested or the water. I chose the water. I quickly turned and ran off to the edge of the cliff, leaping off the precipice into the frigid water below. The water stung me like a million knives searing into my skin. I had to stay quiet. I swam to a small cavern near the cliffs and hid there until I heard the police leave that night. I then swam until I reached the beach and I collapsed onto the cold, wet sand. I vaguely remember Sam, Quil and Embry finding me and dragging me back to Sam's place.

I took a few deep breaths and settled into a deep slumber. As I slept, I dreamt of Bella and what I would do when we were reunited. The one thing I knew for sure is that she would be mine. Alive or dead, she would be mine.

**A/N: I received a ton of responses about Jacob. I decided to give you all a glimpse into his dark and sadistic brain. As you can see, he's not dead. Unfortunately. Keep reading to find out what happens next. Leave some love (or hate :) ).**

# Happiness

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*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 53: Happiness

### EPOV

She said yes. We were engaged. I looked at the sleeping angel in my arms. Her long beautiful hair was splayed across the pillows, covering my arm. She looked so content, her face relaxed and her mouth slightly open. I ran my fingers down her arm and looked at her left hand. It was resting on top of my chest. Her engagement ring was sparkling in the early morning sunlight spilling into our room. I couldn't stop smiling as I tenderly ran my fingers over her ring. She was mine, forever. I was so happy. I pressed a kiss to her forehead before I extricated myself from her arms. She sighed and her brow furrowed before reaching for my pillow. She found it and inhaled deeply and settled back to sleep.

I put on my boxers and padded into the living room of the suite. I opened up the drapes of the room and looked out to a sunny Seattle. I took a deep breath and closed my eyes.

"Mom, I know that it's been a while since I've talked to you," I whispered. "Things have been crazy but I wanted to let you know that I'm happy. So incredibly happy. I've met someone. Mom, she's perfect. You would have loved her. She's my soul mate, my other half."

I padded to the huge arm chair and curled up in it. "Her name is Isabella. However, she likes to be called Bella. Her name is perfect for her. It means beautiful in Italian and that's what she is. Beautiful, both inside and out. She



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has long, dark hair, and deep brown eyes that you can get lost in. She's a musician, like you were. She's actually a music education major at Emerson University. She's brilliant, kind-hearted, selfless, giving and gentle.

"We met on the first day that she moved in. She literally ran into me. I felt this jolt through my body when we touched. To my surprise, that jolt completed me. At the time, I thought nothing of it. However, I was enamored with her beauty. I invited her and my sister, Alice. You remember Alice? The crazy pixie. Anyhow, I invited her and Alice to a party where my band was playing. We wanted to sing this song but we needed a female vocalist. I don't think Jasper would have liked singing in falsetto. So, I asked Alice and she said no. Bella offered and we practiced backstage. Mom, her voice is beautiful. She sounds like an angel. I almost think that she is an angel. Well, we rehearsed and performed for this party. For the first time since you died, my heart felt whole. I didn't feel lost. It was because of my Bella. I was your singer. Bella is mine. She is my singer, my life, my love.

"I knew at that moment that she was it for me. We've had some bumps in the road, but we're happy. She's helped me tremendously in healing and coming to terms with your death. She also guided Carlisle in letting me become a music major. However, we compromised and like Bella I'm a music education major. I begin my classes for my new major this coming semester. I'm so excited.

"However, I'm worried about her, too. She's dealing with an asshole ex-boyfriend. He can't seem to let her go. He kidnapped her the day I flew out to visit her and caused some serious damage to her body and to her spirit. The cops said that he was dead but they didn't find his body. In the back of my mind, I fear that he will return and take my Bella away from me. Mom, I need you to watch over her like you've watched over me. I love her more than my own life and would do anything for her. Absolutely anything to make her happy, make her safe, make her feel loved.

"She'd do the same thing for me. She gave me the most wonderful Christmas present. She worked with Esme and created a set DVDs of our videos of when I was a baby to when you died. I never thought I'd be able to see those videos again, but now I can. Anytime I want. Thanks to my beautiful Bella. Her

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generosity and heart solidified my decision to do something for her. I was toying with the idea, but after receiving her gift, I made my final choice. To propose.

"I proposed to her last night. I never believed in marriage or all that jazz when I was younger. I never thought I'd get the fairy tale. However, I have. With Bella. I proposed to her and she said yes. She said yes! Mom, I really wish you could meet her. You two would have been so close. Bella has so many qualities that are like you, it's scary. However, she's an amazing woman. So strong, so talented, so loving and she's mine.

"I love you, Mom. I miss you and I wish you could be here. Please watch over Bella and over me," I sniffled. I pulled my knees to my chest and rested my head on them.

"Do you talk to her often?" Bella asked quietly.

I raised my head and looked at my girl all wrapped up in the duvet cover. She had a small smile on her face and she looked guilty. "Not recently, but I wanted to tell her about you. How much did you hear?" I asked.

"Almost all of it," she said as she walked to the chair I was sitting in. I put my legs down and she sat down on my lap, nestling her head under my chin. "I felt you get out of bed and I tried to get back to sleep but failed. Thank you for saying all of those things about me to her."

"Bella, you are the most important person to me now. You'll always be the most important person to me. I needed to tell my mom about the love of my life," I whispered into her hair. "I can't wait until we're together forever."

"We already are, Edward," she said as she traced circles on my chest.

"No. Let me rephrase. I can't wait until I see you walk down the aisle to me in a beautiful white dress and we are legally bound together for the rest of our lives," I clarified. "The ring is the first step for the rest of our lives."

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"So, I guess the next logical step is to plan a wedding," she giggled.

"Sounds about right," I said as I tightened my arms around her. "When do want to get married, beautiful?"

"As soon as possible," she breathed. "I can't wait to be Isabella Cullen."

"I can't wait either. We could always go to Vegas like I suggested over the phone," I teased.

"Tempting, Edward. Very tempting. However, I think my family and your family would not be very happy with us in eloping," she replied.

"You know, when you mentioned us eloping over the phone, I had met with the jewelry designer to create your ring that day," I said.

"Really?"

"Yep. I knew I wanted to propose to you. The question was when. The ordeal with Jacob and your amazing present that you gave me solidified my decision to propose on New Year's Eve. I even asked your dad for his permission," I replied truthfully.

"I would have loved to have been a fly on the wall for that conversation," Bella giggled.

"He actually gave his blessing quite willingly. He said that he accepted me as a son when he saw me with you at the hospital, when he said I was already your husband," I told Bella, kissing her forehead. "I did learn something about your dad that morning. Or rather Emmett."

"What?"

"Where Emmett has no filter of inside or outside voice. When I asked your dad if he wanted to see the ring, he boomed just like Emmett," I snorted.

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Bella squinted at the clock and got up off my lap. She dug around in her purse and pulled out her phone. She carried her phone and sat back down in my lap. "What are you doing, beautiful?"

"Calling my mom after I take a picture of my gorgeous ring," Bella explained. She snapped a photo and emailed it to her mom. "Edward, this ring is absolutely beautiful. You spent way too much money on me."

"Nah. I would have gotten you something bigger, but I figured that this would be absolute largest you would handle," I laughed.

"Do I want to know how much?" she squeaked.

"Probably not."

"Oh lord," she cried as she buried her head into my chest. "Please tell me that it's less than a year's worth of tuition at Emerson."

"Sorry, can't do that," I replied, wrapping my arms around her shaking body. "Bella, I'd give anything to you. No matter the cost."

Bella groaned and shook her head. "You're incorrigible, Cullen."

"I know, but you love me," I replied, giving her my signature crooked smirk.

"Yes, I do. Here goes nothing," she said as she dialed her mom. She put the phone on speaker and laid it on her knee.

"Hello?" came a male voice.

"Happy New Year, Phil!" Bella said.

"Happy New Year, Bella! Did you do anything fun last night?" he asked.

"I went out to dinner with Emmett, his girlfriend, Rosalie and Edward. We went to Sky City in the Space Needle. It was delicious," Bella replied. "How

about you?"

"Your mom and I spent New Year's Eve at home. It's a holiday for young people," he sighed.

"Phil, you're fifteen years younger than my mom. You're young," she giggled.

"Psh, whatever, Bella. I feel like I'm a 107," he replied. "My knees are creaking and I'm thinking I need to retire from baseball."

"I'm sorry, Phil. Is Mom there?" Bella asked.

"Yeah, let me go get her for you. It was good talking to you, Bella," Phil responded politely. He put down the phone and Bella looked at me warily. I gave her a kiss as we waited for Renee to pick up the phone.

"Happy New Year, baby girl!" Renee gushed.

"Happy New Year, Mom," Bella smiled.

"So?" Renee pressed.

Bella raised her brows, "So, what?"

"Do you have some news to share with me?"

"Obviously, you've been talking to Charlie," Bella snorted. She weaved her fingers through mine and took another deep breath. "Last night, at midnight, Edward proposed."

"And...? You're killing me here, Bella," Renee squealed.

"And...I said yes. Check your email and you'll see the ring," Bella beamed.

I faintly heard tapping and a loud gasp. "Holy Crow! That is fucking huge!"

"Mom!" Bella admonished.

"Is Edward with you?" Renee asked.

"I'm here," I replied. "Happy New Year, Mrs. Dwyer."

"Renee, sweetheart. I'm going to be your mother-in-law, so none of this Mrs. Dwyer crap," she teased. "You have fantastic taste, Edward."

"Thank you, Renee. I wanted to get Bella the best and hopefully I succeeded," I replied, kissing Bella's temple.

"Oh, you succeeded alright. I can't wait to see it, live and in person. Both of you need to come to Jacksonville for Easter," Renee invited.

"I was planning on it," Bella agreed. "We'll have to see about Edward."

"I'll be there. I wouldn't miss it for the world, Renee," I said quickly. Bella looked at me with wide eyes. I smiled at her and kissed her soft lips. "I promised Bella that I wouldn't be away from her for any reason. I can get out of the Cullen Easter celebration. They'll understand."

"Fantastic! Oh, Bella, I can't wait to begin planning your wedding. Have you decided on a date?" Renee asked.

"No, not yet. As soon as we figure it out, we'll let you know," Bella explained. I leaned in and began kissing Bella's neck. She whimpered quietly. My mind was thinking of Bella in a white dress, walking toward me and becoming my wife. I was wanting it now. However, I also wanted Bella now. I licked her ear, pulling her earlobe between my teeth, nibbling on her soft skin. "Mom, I have another call. I have to go. I'll call you later this week. I love you."

"I love you, too, Bella. Love you, Edward," Renee said.

I pulled away from Bella's fragrant skin, "Love you too, Renee. See you at Easter." I ended the call and placed the phone on the ottoman in front of us.

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Bella looked at me and her eyes were dark, almost black. She was still wrapped in the duvet cover and she shifted on my lap so she was straddling my legs. She slipped the cover from her shoulders and underneath she was naked. A low growl escaped my lips as I took her face between my hands and kissed her, slipping my tongue between her lips. Her fingers twisted into my messy hair and she pulled my head back, exposing my neck. She nibbled and licked along the column of my neck. She took my earlobe into her teeth and bit down. I moaned and my hips bucked. My hands moved down her body and grabbed her ass, pressing her heat closer to my cock.

"Bella, I have to feel you around me. I want to make love to my fiancée," I breathed against her hair. I took her face and pressed kisses on her cheeks, jaw and ending with her lips. Bella got up off my lap and tugged at my boxers. I lifted my hips and slid them down my legs. I gently pushed Bella onto the ottoman and I kissed her lips, moving down her body to her breasts. Her body arched and she groaned. My hands moved up her legs and I ran my fingers along her slit. She was so wet. I slipped two fingers into her entrance and began pumping as I kissed and nibbled her breasts and nipples.

"Edward, please. I need to feel you inside me," she begged. I removed my fingers and she moved further back on the ottoman. I lined my cock to her entrance. My eyes met hers and I slid into her warm moist pussy. We both groaned and Bella's head fell back onto the ottoman. I was on my knees and I easily slid in and out of her.

"You are so beautiful, Bella," I purred against her skin as I leaned to press kisses to her chest. "I love you."

"Oh, Edward. I love you so much. Harder, baby," she growled.

I arched a brow and pounded into her body. With one of my hands, I grasped her hips and with the other I rolled her clit. She arched her body and swiveled her hips to the rhythm I created with my fingers. I lifted one of her legs and placed it on my shoulder and I dove in deeper. "Fuck, Bella. You feel so good," I hissed. "I need to feel you come, baby."

"Oh, Edward," she breathed. She lifted her other leg to my shoulder and she squeezed her muscles around my cock. I slammed my member into her and I could feel my body twitch. Her eyes clamped shut and her muscles clenched involuntarily around me. "Oh, my *GOD!* Harder, Edward."

I pounded and I watched my fiancée come. Her face was contorted in the most erotic of ways and her hands were squeezing her breasts. As I watched her, my dick twitched and I spilled into her. I roared as I came and collapsed against her, breathing heavily. Her legs fell around my waist and she held onto me. "Will it always be this intense, Edward?"

"I certainly hope so. I love you, baby. You always manage to make me feel so good," I breathed. "I've got to be squishing you, but I can't move."

"You're fine, handsome. I love feeling your skin against mine. I feel so safe with you, especially like this," she replied as she wiggled her hips, emphasizing our connection. I was still somewhat hard and her wiggle brought my cock to attention.

Not breaking our connection, I picked up Bella and sat down on the chair. I kissed her beautiful face, focusing my attention on her lips. "I love you, beautiful girl."

She felt me get harder in her body and she swiveled her hips again and thrust her tongue into my mouth. Her hands forcefully tugged on my unruly hair. "I want to feel you come again, Edward. I want to feel your huge cock inside me," she purred against my lips. She moved up and down on my dick, slowly, painfully. I whimpered and locked my eyes with hers. I rocked my hips and pulled Bella's head back. I nipped at her neck and my hands fondled her breasts. She moved with me as I pounded my rock hard member into her body.

"I love the way you feel, Bella. So wet. So tight. Perfect," I growled. "You're mine, baby. As I'm yours."

"Only yours, Edward." She snaked her hand between us and began rubbing her clit. She leaned back and looked down at our connection. We watched as I



moved in and out of her slick folds. I felt my body tighten and my second release was imminent. "Edward, I'm...shit..." Her muscles clenched around me and she screamed. Her body flushing a delightful pink and I pulled her close to me, kissing her lips, muffling her screams. I felt my cock twitch and I spilled into again. I moaned against her mouth and held her flush to my body. She pulled away and rested her head on my shoulder, her body twitching as we slowly returned from our orgasmic high.

Bella's phone began ringing on the floor and neither one of us wanted to move to get it. We decided to let it go to voicemail. A few moments later, my phone began ringing. I grumbled and Bella got up off my lap, my cock sliding out of her. I moaned and I walked to my phone. It was Emmett.

"What?" I barked.

"Good morning to you, too, sunshine," Emmett laughed. "You got engaged last night. I figured you'd be happy."

"I was happy. About ten seconds ago, before you called," I grumbled as I looked for my boxers.

"Were you getting it on with my sister?" Emmett asked.

"Yes, Emmett I was. I'd like to go back and finish what I started," I retorted.

"Well, too bad. Rose and I are hungry and we want to go down for breakfast. How soon can you and your fiancée be ready to go?" Emmett laughed.

"Um, a half hour or so?" I suggested.

"You have 28 minutes," Emmett said. "No time for sexytime. Besides, she's still my sister and I can still kick your ass."

"I know, Emmett," I retorted. Bella got up and asked for the phone. She was still delightfully naked. I passed the phone to her.

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"Emmett McCarty Swan, you are an ass. We will be ready when we're ready," she snapped. "We'll call you. I'm done with my fiancé. He has a blowjob coming to him."

Bella handed me the phone and I tentatively held it back up to my ear, "Em?"

"Take as long as you want. I need to bleach my brain," Emmett squeaked. He clicked off the call and I did the same.

"Remind me to *never* get on your bad side," I chortled. "About that blowjob?"

xx LC xx

After some hot shower sex and an amazing blowjob later, Bella and I got dressed. I was wearing a pair of jeans and a forest green argyle sweater with gray and brown accents. Bella had on a pair of black leggings and a long blue tunic that was draped over her body. She didn't wear her sling, but carried it with her. We headed down to Emmett and Rosalie's room and knocked on their door. Rosalie opened it up.

"I wholeheartedly apologize for my boyfriend. He's a douche," Rose said sincerely. "I was in the shower when he called you and I didn't know he was going to do that."

"It's okay, Rosalie. He got what was coming to him," Bella giggled.

"Yeah, he mentioned something about bleaching his brain. What did you say?" Rose asked.

"I just said that I was going to give Edward a blowjob and that sent his mind into overload," Bella said calmly.

Rosalie blinked and looked at Bella. She looked at me quickly and then returned her gaze to Bella. "You fucking rock, Bella!" Rose exclaimed giving Bella a high five. "Did she follow through?"

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"Oh, yeah," I beamed. I slipped my arms around her waist and blew a raspberry to her neck. She giggled and swatted at me. "Best blowjob, ever."

"I just got the idea out of my head. Please stop talking about my sister and blowjobs! I'm going to hurl," Emmett whined.

"Emmett, Edward and I have sex. We do sexual things. Get over it," Bella snapped. "I don't care what you do. However, I do get a sick, perverse kick out of seeing you squirm, brother bear."

"I'm glad you're enjoying yourself, Isabelly. I'm seriously ill over here," Emmett blanched.

"Spit or swallow, Bella?" Rose asked. I snorted and tightened my hold around Bella's waist.

"Rosalie Lillian Hale! I don't need to know that!" Emmett shouted.

"Swallow, Rose. Where would I spit it?" Bella replied calmly. "It actually tastes pretty good." Bella turned and kissed me on my nose. I scrunched my nose and she giggled.

"Enough! Let's go get breakfast before I kick your ass, Bella. Yours too, Cullen," Emmett sneered.

"What did I do?" I squeaked.

"You put your dick in my sister's mouth."

"Oh, no, Emmy. I happily took his dick into my mouth. I've never been pushed to do anything with Edward," Bella chastised.

"You all suck," Emmett grumbled. He picked up his keys and wallet and stomped to the door. "Are we going?"

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Rosalie walked over to Emmett and glared at him. She smacked him upside the head and opened the door, heading into the hallway. Bella elbowed Emmett in the ribs and gave him a murderous stare. I shrugged and darted past him, avoiding the impending beating he wanted to give me.

We headed down to the restaurant in the hotel and ordered breakfast. We ate in a comfortable silence. I idly played with Bella's engagement ring as we ate, ecstatic that she did indeed say yes. After breakfast, we headed back to our respective rooms and packed our belongings. I gifted the several dozen bouquet of roses that I had purchased for Bella. We only took one bouquet with us. In return, the hotel took 20% off my final bill. We loaded up the SUV I had rented and drove back to Forks.

Charlie was introduced to Rosalie and he immediately fell in love. We went out to dinner with Charlie and Sue, his girlfriend, the day before Bella and I were returning to New York. We went to a small restaurant in Forks called The Lodge. Bella told Charlie and Sue about my proposal and showed off her engagement ring. Sue gawked and seemed genuinely happy for her. Charlie told us that he had a doctor's appointment and that it had gone well. The most recent scans had revealed that the cancer had been stopped but he still had to go through radiation therapy to prevent the growth of new cells. He also informed us that if he gets a clean bill of health, he'll be returning to work as the Chief of the Forks Police Department as early as June.

We returned to Bella's home and we needed to head to bed early. We had to be on the road by no later than seven to get to the airport. Bella had packed her bags and was ready to go. I just needed to do some last minute packing before going. I finished putting things into my suitcase and we settled to sleep in her tiny bed.

The alarm went off early the next morning. Bella groaned and pulled a pillow over her head. I smacked her ass and got up to shower. I decided not to shave as I was going to spend five hours on a plane. I also slipped a cap over my hair. I wanted to be comfortable.

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Bella got up and trudged to the shower. She fumbled in there, but didn't ask for help. I noticed that she didn't wash her hair and she was wearing her glasses. She pulled the cap I had on my head and put it on her head, pulling her ponytail through the back. I narrowed my eyes and tickled her sides. She arched a brow and went to go get dressed. I quickly ran my fingers through my hair and got dressed myself. I put on a pair of old jeans and a t-shirt. I pulled a fleece over my shoulders and slipped on my Chucks. Bella was wearing something similar with jeans, a long-sleeved thermal t-shirt and a fleece. She pulled on a pair of sneakers and pronounced herself ready to go. I zipped up my suitcase, making sure I had my DVDs and all of my clothes. I heaved it down the stairs and placed it by the door. Bella was zipping up her suitcase and gathering her carryon bags.

"Is your suitcase ready to go, beautiful?" I asked.

"Yeah. I think so," she said as she looked around her room. She nodded and I picked it up and placed it next to mine. I darted up the stairs and grabbed my carryon. She picked up a large guitar case and her messenger bag and slung it over her shoulder. I gave her a pointed stare and held my hand out. She took off her messenger bag and handed it to me. I slipped it over my shoulders and picked up the guitar case. Bella rolled her eyes and walked past me. I picked up my messenger bag and walked down the stairs.

Bella and I had a breakfast of Pop Tarts and milk. When we were finished, Emmett, Rosalie and Charlie had come downstairs. "You guys all ready to go?" asked Charlie.

"Yep. I think we've got everything," I replied.

"I'll miss you, Bells," Charlie said quietly. He held open his arms and Bella melted into them. "I love you, baby girl."

"I love you, too, Daddy," she replied into his chest. "I'll see you soon. We'll call you when we land."

"Are you guys going to the apartment?" Rosalie asked.

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"Yeah. We're spending the night there tonight and then going to the Cullen Castle for a few days," I explained. "My parents have a few presents for Bella for Christmas. We also need to tell them about our engagement."

"Congratulations, Edward. I'm proud of you, son. Take care of my little girl," Charlie said as he gave me an awkward one-armed hug.

"I will. I promise, Charlie," I said as I smiled at him.

Bella gave Emmett a hug and he kissed her head. "I'll see you in a couple of weeks, Isabelly. I love you."

"I love you, too, Emmy," Bella replied, punching him in the stomach.

I held out my hand to Emmett and he grasped it, tightly. He then pulled me into a tight embrace. "I love you like a brother, but I will not hesitate to kick your ass if you hurt Bella."

"Got it, Em. Love you, too, bro."

"See you soon, Rose," Bella said as she hugged her. "Love you."

"Love you, too, Bells," she smiled. Rose turned to me and wrapped her arms around my waist. "Bye, Edward."

"Bye, Rosalie. See you on campus," I replied. "Bella, we got to go. I need to return the car. I'm sorry."

"It's okay. I'll see you all soon. Love you," Bella sniffled.

Emmett and I picked up the suitcases and loaded them in the back of the SUV. We placed the carryon bags into the backseat. Bella settled herself into the passenger side and I got into the driver's side. I eased the huge vehicle out of the driveway, honking as I pulled away. Bella waved through the window.

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We made quick time from Forks to Seattle. We drove the airport and I returned the car to the rental place. I paid for the rental we waited until the shuttle arrived to take us to the airline. We got onto the shuttle bus and rode it to the departure terminal. We checked in and checked our bags. Bella didn't want to check her guitar but was forced to because of its size. Unbeknownst to my girl, I had purchased first class tickets for us back New York. Unlike the last time we were at an airport, we both went through security without a problem. We settled near our gate and waited for our flight to be called.

Bella pulled out a book and laid her head on my shoulder. I took out some staff paper and jotted down some notes and ideas of a song running through my head. I had hummed it to Bella on New Year's Eve but hadn't written anything down. We sat comfortably in our little bubble of happiness until first class passengers were called to board our flight. I put my things away and Bella looked at me with an expression of confusion.

"They're calling our flight, beautiful," I explained.

"They're calling first class passengers, Edward," she countered.

"Yeah, that's us. Come on," I said as I held out my hand.

"You are too much, Cullen," she snorted as she took my hand.

"We aim to please, Swan," I teased. I led us to the gate and the flight attendant scanned our tickets. She smiled and told us to enjoy our flight. We sat down in our seats in first class and I pulled out my laptop, a splitter and two sets of head phones. I put them into the pocket in front of me and gave Bella lopsided smirk. She rolled her eyes and turned back to her book. Our flight took off uneventfully and once we were allowed to take out the electronic devices, I took out my laptop. I set it on the tray table in between us and plugged in the splitter. I put the two sets of head phones in and handed Bella a pair. She put them in and I loaded a movie. We decided on watching *Avatar*. It was a longer movie and by the time it was done we would be almost home.

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We watched the movie and ate our meals that were provided by the airline. We made excellent time back to Buffalo. We landed and taxied to our gate. I put my laptop back into my messenger bag and got ready to get off the plane. When the doors opened, I picked up both of our bags and we left the plane. Bella pulled out her phone and called Charlie.

"We're here. We're heading to baggage claim," she said. She mumbled a few things and then ended the call. "Hey, Edward, how are we getting back to our apartment?"

"Well, my parents dropped off my Volvo back to the apartment while I was in Seattle. My dad dropped me off at the airport when I left. They also arranged for a limo to pick us up. So, we're all good, beautiful," I replied as I kissed her soft lips. "I just need to call them when we pick up our bags."

"Oh, okay," Bella replied. She linked her hand with mine and we walked to the baggage claim to pick up our suitcases and Bella's guitar. Our bags were one of the first bags out and so I grabbed them and handed Bella her guitar case. I dialed the limo company and told them that we were ready for pick up. The operator asked for my last name and flight number. She then told me to wait by vestibule 3G. I gathered our bags and walked out to the assigned vestibule. A large black limo pulled up and the driver popped out of the limo.

"Mr. and Mrs. Cullen?" he asked politely.

"Yes?" I replied. I smiled at what he said. Bella giggled.

"Great. Let me grab your bags for you. I'm Ripley and I'll be your driver today. Why don't you both get in the back and we'll be on our way," Ripley smiled.

"Thanks. You have the address?" I asked.

"Yes sir, Mr. Cullen. The Dorwood Hill Apartment Complex near Emerson University, right?"

"Yeah. How long do you think it'll take to get there?" I asked.



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"About two hours. Just sit back and relax, sir. There's beverages and snacks in the rear of the limo," Ripley explained.

"Great," I replied as I opened the door. Bella got in and scooted over on the seat. I slid in next to her and opened up the mini-fridge. "Want something to drink?"

"Water would be great," Bella replied. I swiped a water and handed it to her. I decided to live a little and grabbed a beer. Bella quirked a brow and sipped her water.

"In case you haven't forgotten, Edward, you need to be 21 to drink alcohol," Bella teased.

"What? I'll be 21 in June," I retorted.

"That's six months from now, Edward."

"What are you going to do about it, Bella?" I said as I took a pull from the beer. She took the beer from my hand and put it in the cup holder.

"I'm going to punish you, Edward," she cooed. "Do not make a sound. We don't want to alert the driver to our activities." Bella reached up and pressed a button. The privacy screen between the driver and the back of the limo slid up. Ripley had just got into the car and pulled away from the curb. Bella got up and knelt in front of me. I licked my lips and involuntarily squeaked. "Not a sound, Edward."

I nodded mutely and my eyes widened. She reached for the button of my jeans. She skillfully unbuttoned my jeans and pulled the zipper down. She leaned forward and kissed my lips. She hummed, "I can taste your offense on your lips, Edward. Too young to be drinking beer." She reached for the can and she took her own sip. She leaned forward and kissed me again. I could taste the beer on her lips. I licked her bottom lip and she pulled away abruptly.

Bella lifted my t-shirt and ran her fingers along the waist band of my jeans and my boxers. She moved forward and kissed my belly, swirling her tongue around my navel. She took another sip of the beer and repeated the action. Her tongue was cold and my body hitched at the sensation. She looked up at me through her long lashes. I removed the baseball cap from her head so I could see my beautiful girl. I tossed it onto the seat next to me. Bella moved her soft, tiny hand to my cock that was straining in my boxers. She pulled it out and pumped it a few times. She looked at it and licked the tip. I gasped and she looked into my eyes.

"No sound, Edward. None. No squeaks, no whimpers, nothing," she warned. She took another sip of the beer and she swallowed. She wrapped her lips around my dick and my hips bucked. She licked my hard member and pumped with her hand. I was breathing heavily and I gently caressed the back of Bella's head. She hummed and dragged her teeth along the bottom of my shaft. I bit my lip to prevent the moan that threatened to leave my body. Bella removed her mouth and took another sip. She moved her lips and tongue to my balls and I was dying. Dying the most pleasurable death imaginable. I ran my fingers through my hair.

Bella smirked at me as she took another pull of my beer. She put her cool mouth around my cock again and drew it all the way into her mouth. It hit the back of her throat and she raised a brow at me, taking me deeper. My chest was heaving and I needed to make some kind of sound. However, I knew I couldn't. Bella drew her mouth until she was at the very tip of my cock. She swirled her tongue along the tip. She pulled away and took another sip. She repeated the swirling action with her tongue and plunged my member fully into her mouth. She bobbed her head, never breaking eye contact with me. Her hands pumped with her mouth and massaged my balls. She ran her teeth over my cock and I could feel my body react. I gently ran my fingers through her hair and looked at her eyes, willing her to know that I was close. She knew, though. Bella moved faster, pumping harder. My eyes rolled back into my head and I released into her mouth. I covered my face with the baseball cap, inhaling Bella's scent. Bella swallowed all I had to offer and released my cock from her sweet, yet torturous mouth. I looked down at her and she took a final pull from the beer and she kissed me sweetly. "You can talk now, Edward."

## La Cantante

"Holy Christ, Bella. That was fucking insane," I breathed. She leaned her chin against my thigh and gently put me back into my boxers and jeans.

"You like?" Bella asked, coyly.

"I more than just like, baby. I love," I said as I reached for her. I pulled her onto my lap, plunging my tongue into her mouth. I could taste the beer and myself on her tongue. I growled quietly at the flavor. "I'm so returning the favor, baby."

Bella giggled and buried her head against my shoulder. "You'll have to wait until we get home, Edward. I finished your beer."

"Damn it. There are other things we could try," I suggested, wiggling my brows. "But at home."

"Mr. Cullen?" came the disembodied voice of Ripley through the speakers.

I pressed a button, "Yes?"

"We're at your apartment complex," he said politely.

"Thank you, Ripley." I clicked the button off and righted myself. I quickly buttoned my jeans and pulled up my fly. I shook my head and Bella looked at me innocently. "You are a vixen."

"Who me?" Bella asked, fluttering her eyelashes.

"Yes, you. We're home. I want to take you to bed and cuddle with you, beautiful," I purred. "I love you, Bella."

"I love you, too, Edward," she replied, kissing me on the lips. She got up gracefully and I opened the door. I got out and paid Ripley for the ride and he assisted me in bringing the bags into the apartment building. I gave him a good tip and Bella and I rode the elevator up to our apartment. Bella took out her keys and opened the door. I followed her inside and shut and locked the door. I

## La Cantante

picked her up and carried her to our bedroom and plopped her on the bed. She squealed and tried to get up. I pinned her with my body. "We have to unpack and do laundry," she admonished.

"Tomorrow. Bed and cuddling now," I replied. I pressed kisses along the column of her neck and I could feel her relenting.

"Fine, Edward. You are just too convincing," she replied as she tugged on my hair. "It's hard to say no to you."

"It's because I'm so adorable," I laughed.

"Yes, you are. I love you, baby," Bella yawned.

"See? You're tired. You wouldn't have been able to do laundry even if you wanted to," I teased. "I love you, too, beautiful."

Bella got up and removed her clothes, pulling a pair of pajamas from the dresser. I took off my clothes and pulled down the comforter. I lay down in the bed and Bella crawled in soon after. She nestled against my chest, pressing a kiss to my swan. Her breathing evened out and she was asleep. I held her to my body and I soon followed my beautiful fiancée.

**A/N: Okay, so I've got a ton of comments about keeping Jacob around. He's a jackass. However, it would be too easy if he died when he jumped off the cliff. He will get his punishment. As will Sam and Emily...well maybe not Emily. I like her. She's got some sense. Please leave some love... :)**

# Only Dogs Can Hear Pixies Squeal

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 54: Only Dogs Can Hear Pixies Squeal

### BPOV

I woke up to an empty bed the next morning. I stretched my body and padded out of the bedroom. I heard Edward puttering in the guest room. He was sitting on the floor with both of our bags open and two laundry baskets in front of him. He was sorting our clothes. "Morning, handsome. You know, you're sexy when you're all domestic," I teased.

Edward gave me a lopsided smirk, "Thanks, baby. You zonked out as soon as you changed into your pajamas. I was soon behind you," he giggled. "I woke up early and decided to get a head start on the laundry. How am I doing?"

"Looks good, Cullen. I'll leave you to it. I'm making breakfast," I replied. I turned and moved to the kitchen. I looked in our fridge and pulled out some eggs. I checked the date and they were fine. I cracked some eggs into a bowl and took out a frying pan and some cheese. I heard Edward put the laundry into the washing machine and he walked into the kitchen, sitting on the counter near the stove. He pressed a button on the coffee maker and it began percolating. "I've missed this, Edward. I'm glad I'm home."

"Me too, beautiful. This place was not the same without you," Edward replied. "Do you need help?"

"Nope, I'm good. If you want to take out some plates that would be great, though."

## La Cantante

"Your wish is my command, Bella," he said with a grin. He hopped off the counter and took out some plates. He also went into the freezer and got some bread and placed it into the toaster. I plated the eggs and grabbed two mugs for our coffee. I poured us both a cup and placed the plates and mugs onto the kitchen table. Edward got the bread and placed it on a plate and got out some butter and forks. We sat down and ate our breakfast in a comfortable silence. Edward idly played with my engagement ring when we finished our breakfast. Edward got up after we finished and he did the dishes. I went and grabbed the other basket of laundry that Edward was working on and carried it to the laundry room.

"I'm going to hop into the shower, Edward. What time are we heading to your parents' house?" I asked.

"Esme invited us to dinner, so about three?" Edward responded.

"Sounds good. Love you, handsome," I grinned.

"I love you more, beautiful," he replied. He leaned over and brushed his soft lips against mine. "Hmmm, another one." I leaned in and pulled his bottom lip into my teeth. Edward moaned and pulled away. "Tease."

"But you love me," I retorted.

"Very much, Bella. Go shower," he said as he swatted my ass. I yelped and bounced away. I took a quick shower, washing my body and my hair. My arm was much better. It only hurt when I moved it a certain way. The rest of my bruises were almost gone and the nightmares were waning. After I finished my shower, I ran some mousse through my hair and decided to let it air dry. I popped in my contacts and got dressed. I wanted to look nice for dinner with Esme, Carlisle and Alice. I took out a white lacy bra and white lacy thong. I padded into the closet and took out a pair of grey leggings and a purple sweater. I put them on and fluffed my hair. I got a pair of socks and slipped them along with my knee high black boots.

## La Cantante

Edward walked into the bedroom and grabbed a pair of boxers from the dresser. "Are you done in the bathroom, beautiful?"

"I just need to put on some makeup but you can go ahead, Edward," I responded. Edward nodded and hopped into the shower. I took out my book from the airport and curled up on the couch in the living room. I hadn't heard Edward finish his shower but he plopped down next to me. His hair was still wet and it flopped in his eyes. "You need a haircut, Edward."

"I know. Can we leave after the laundry is done so I can get the mop cut?" he asked.

"Sounds good to me," I said as I kissed his nose. "I'm going to put some makeup on. I think the washer is done. Can you flip the clothes?"

"Got it, beautiful," he said as he got up. He held out a hand and helped me off the couch. I walked to the bathroom and put some makeup on my pale features. I used the stuff that I was given on New Year's Eve to cover my remaining bruises on my jaw. They were almost gone, but were noticeable without the makeup. I finished putting on my makeup and shrugged.

*That's as good as it's going to get.*

I walked back into the living room and found Edward looking at my guitar case. "Do you want to play it, Edward?" I asked, stifling a giggle.

He nodded and bounced over to my new guitar. He reverently took it out of the case and strummed the strings. He made a face and I did the same. It was horribly out of tune. I reached for the guitar and he handed it to me. I quickly tuned it and passed it back to Edward. He plucked out a few songs and hummed. "This is a sweet guitar, Bella."

"Yeah. Emmett and Charlie got it for me for Christmas. Emmett must have told him that Jacob broke my other one," I explained. "It has great action and it's easy to play. However, I haven't had a chance because my wrist hurts when I play too much."

## La Cantante

"That's understandable. It'll take time before you can really rock out on this," Edward smirked. "Until then, can I use it?"

"Any time you want, handsome," I replied. He grinned at me and continued playing my guitar idly. I picked up my book and continued reading. After about a half hour, Edward put my guitar back in its case and laid his head on my lap as I read. I ran my fingers through his soft hair until the dryer buzzed. He got up and switched the clothes. He dashed and put the laundry away and quickly returned to his spot with his head in my lap.

"Bella?" he asked as he laced his fingers with mine.

"Yes, Edward?" I returned.

"I don't want push you or anything, but when do you want to get married?" he asked as he looked up at me.

I put my book down and looked down at his handsome face. "How about this summer, if it's feasible," I suggested.

"You don't want to wait until we're done with school?" he questioned.

"Do you?" I countered.

"Hell no. I want you to be Mrs. Cullen like yesterday," he smiled.

"Okay, then let's focus on this summer," I stated. "School starts in September. How about we focus on late July or early August."

Edward pulled out his phone and looked at the dates. "How about August 13th? It'll give us two weeks before school starts to go on our honeymoon," Edward grinned.

"I like that. August 13th it is! That means we have eight months to plan a wedding. Do you think we can do it?" I asked.



## La Cantante

"With Alice and Esme on the job, definitely. They are the queens of planning," Edward laughed. He sat up and gently cupped my chin, rubbing his thumb on my bottom lip. "We're getting married. We set a date. I love you, Mrs. Cullen."

"I love you, too, Edward. Who says I'm taking your name, though?" I teased. "Perhaps I want to stay 'Swan.' Or at least hyphenate."

"Bella," Edward warned.

"I'm kidding, Edward. Jeez," I replied, kissing his nose. The dryer buzzed and I got up to put this batch of clothes away. "You want to get your hair cut after I'm done?"

"Yep. I already called the salon and made an appointment for 2:30. If we leave in the next fifteen minutes, we'll be good," Edward responded. I nodded and grabbed the clean clothes from the dryer. I carried the basket and put them away. Ten minutes later, I walked out with my coat and purse. Edward slid on his leather jacket and grabbed his keys. We rode the elevator down to the parking garage and got into his Soccer Mobile. Edward eased out of the parking spot and drove to the salon that he got his haircut earlier in the year. When we got there, I went to the bookstore and meandered while he got a duded up. He sent me a text when he was done and I darted over to the salon. I sat down on the bench and waited for him to come up to the front. He ambled to the front of the salon and paid at the front counter.

As he paid, I watched my fiancé, ogling him. He was truly the most beautiful man on the planet. He was tall and lean, but not overly thin. He had the perfect amount of muscles on his body. His arms were strong; they made me feel safe. Edward's legs were long and muscled, like a runner. His face was perfect. His jaw was so angled, it could cut glass. When he smiled, he had a dimple on his left cheek and his signature smirk. His teeth were perfect, but I knew that was due to the braces that he wore in middle school and high school. His eye color varied from the color of jade to a deep forest green, depending on what he wore. His skin was flawless, save for a few freckles that sprinkled over his nose and across his shoulders. Then there was his hair. His hair was his crowning glory. It was the most unique shade of bronze, copper, brown and

## La Cantante

red. There was a bit of blond in there too. It was uniquely him and perfect.

"Are you done ogling me?" Edward teased, his emerald eyes sparkling.

"Never, baby. I just can't believe that you're mine," I retorted.

"I'll only be yours, love. For the rest of our lives," he responded as he held a hand out to me. I took it and stood up. He led me to his car and I slid into the passenger seat. Edward got into the driver's side and we drove to his parents' home.

xx LC xx

We arrived at Edward's home and he helped me out of the car. We linked hands and walked up the front steps of the large house. Edward unlocked the door and ushered me inside.

"Hello? Is anyone home?" Edward called.

"In the kitchen, my sweet boy," Esme yelled back. Edward pulled on my hand and we walked into the kitchen. "Welcome home, Edward. We missed you." Esme walked up to Edward and wrapped her arms around his neck. "You got a haircut. It's about time. You've been looking shaggy."

Edward rolled his eyes and smiled at his mom. Esme turned to me and gave me a warm embrace. "We've missed you too, Bella. How was your Christmas?"

"It was quiet, but good. The time following Christmas is what the most stressful," I grimaced.

"Edward told me about your run-in with your ex-boyfriend. What an asshole," Esme chided.

"Mom! Language," Edward teased.

## La Cantante

"What? He is. He hurt your Bella," Esme said as she wrapped her arms around my waist.

"I know. I'm just teasing you. Is Carlisle and Alice around?" Edward asked.

"Carlisle is in his office and Alice is on the phone with Jasper," Esme replied.

"I'll go get them. I'll be right back," Edward said as he darted out of the kitchen.

"Do you need any help, Esme?" I asked.

"No, sweetheart. Everything is made. All I need to do is put in the oven which I'll do now," Esme replied, patting my cheek. "Do you want something to drink?"

"I'll grab some water, if you don't mind," I said. I walked over to the fridge and pulled a bottle of water out. I also got one for Edward. I heard Edward, Carlisle and a whining Alice come down the stairs. I chuckled and took a sip of my water. Edward came and pulled me into the living room, along with his mom. We stood by the fireplace and he looked at me with such love.

"Bella and I have something that we want to share with all of you," Edward began. He leaned down and kissed my forehead. I took a deep breath and wrapped my arms around his waist.

"Well?" Alice asked.

"Edward proposed on New Year's Eve and I said yes," I replied. Esme and Carlisle shared a warm smile and got up to hug Edward and I.

"Congratulations, Edward and Bella. We're so happy for you," Carlisle said sincerely. He pulled me into an embrace.

"Thank you, Carlisle," I said quietly. Esme wrapped her arms around my neck and squeezed tightly.

## La Cantante

"Congratulations! Let's see the ring," she gushed. I held out my hand and her jaw dropped. "It's beautiful. I was there when Edward worked with the designer. I never saw the finished product. It was made just for your hand, Bella." I smiled and gazed at my ring.

Alice was uncharacteristically quiet. Edward and I looked at each other warily and then looked at Alice. "Ali?" I asked.

"Pix?" Edward questioned.

Alice blinked a few times. She looked at Edward and then looked at me. She returned her gaze to Edward and squealed. It was so high pitched, only dogs could hear it. Alice vaulted herself into Edward's arms, wrapping her legs around his waist. He managed to catch her. Just barely, though. "Edward! I totally did not see this coming! I'm so happy for you. I'm going to get a sister!"

"Okay, spider monkey," Edward laughed. Alice climbed down Edward and wrapped her arms around my neck, squeezing me tightly. I squeaked in pain. "Alice, be careful. Bella is still recovering from her ordeal."

"Oops, sorry. Let me see, let me see, let me see," she begged, bouncing on her toes. I held out my hand and she nearly ripped my arm out of the socket. "Holy crap. That diamond is huge, Edward! If I had to guess, D flawless, approximately two carats, oval cut?"

"Uh, yeah, Pixie," Edward responded, uncomfortably. "Do you have a gemology degree that we don't know about?"

"No. I just know about diamonds. However, I'm mad at you, Edward Anthony," Alice said as she poked him in the chest.

"Whatever for, Alice?" Edward said as he crossed his arms across his muscled torso.

"Why didn't you ask me to come and pick out Bella's engagement ring? I helped you with the promise ring," Alice whined.

## La Cantante

"I know, Pixie, but I was afraid that you would have spilled the beans to Bella," Edward explained. "I wanted the proposal to be a surprise. Believe me, it was. I hadn't planned on it until everything went down with Jacob and when I got my present from Bella for Christmas."

"What did Bella get you for Christmas?" Alice asked.

"A set of DVDs of my mom and me," Edward said quietly. "She transferred all of the videos onto DVD with pictures and music. It was perfect."

"Actually, I have a set for you, as well. They're in the car," I said to Carlisle and Esme. Edward handed me the keys and I darted out to the Volvo to get the set that was made for Edward's parents. I handed them to Carlisle and he smiled. "They're the same as Edward's. Esme sent all of the videos to my home in Seattle and I have a friend of mine who does this type of thing. I hope you enjoy them."

"Bella, this is a thoughtful gift. For Edward and for us," Carlisle said gently.

"Thank you, very much. You are truly a blessing to this family." Carlisle looked up at me and his eyes glistened. He wrapped his arms around me and we swayed as he cried against my shoulder. Esme joined the embrace as did Edward and Alice. We eventually pulled apart and gathered our emotions.

"Bella, I always knew that you were special for Edward. Your heart and kindness are incredible. I can see why he is so taken with you. I can't speak for Esme or Alice, but I already love you like a daughter and I'm so happy that you've come into our lives."

"Carlisle, you have no idea what your words mean to me. Thank you and I love you. All of you, so much," I sniffled.

"Okay, enough of the crying stuff," Carlisle laughed. "Back to the wedding! Have you set a date?"

"Yes, actually we discussed that today," Edward replied. He pulled me into a large armchair in the living room. He sat down and pulled me into his lap. "We are thinking of August 13th of this summer."

"That's perfect," Esme squealed. "Where are you thinking of having the ceremony?"

"We haven't gotten that far," I replied sheepishly. "We just settled on the date."

"Well, Bella, you're from Seattle. Do you want to get married there or do you want to get married here?" Alice asked.

"I'm not sure, honestly. I've lived in Phoenix, too. However, I've never really felt at home in either Seattle or Phoenix. I've only felt at home when I'm with Edward," I mumbled.

"Why not have your wedding here? At our home?" Esme offered.

"Oh, Esme, that's too much," I countered.

"Nonsense. We have the space. It would be our pleasure to host your wedding here," Esme responded.

"What do you think?" I asked Edward.

"I'm fine with that," Edward replied, gently squeezing my knee.

"Okay, we'll have the wedding here," I smiled.

Alice and Esme squealed and pulled me off Edward's lap. I looked at him, my eyes wide with fear. "Help!" I cried as they brought me to the office. We spent the next two hours discussing colors, menus, wedding cakes, flowers and other various wedding things. My head was splitting by the time I was released from their clutches. However, Edward was right. Alice and Esme were the queens of planning. We decided on my colors and a basic idea for the floral arrangements. We also made tentative plans for going wedding dress shopping. We had called my mom for that and decided on going over President's Day weekend and going to this huge wedding dress store in New York City.

## La Cantante

I was spent after the planning session with Esme and Alice. I walked down to the basement and found Edward watching a movie. I plopped down and put my feet in his lap. "This is going to be a ton of work!" I moaned. "Planning the wedding and going to school? What were we thinking?"

"It'll be fine, Bella. What do you need to do?" Edward chuckled.

"Well, the venue is figured out. So, that's one thing to check off the list," I said with a flourish. "We need to choose the flowers, decide on the menu, get a photographer for both engagement and wedding photos, get a minister, choose a wedding cake, get tuxedos for you and your groomsmen, get me a gown, decide on bridesmaid dresses, figure out the music for the ceremony, get a DJ or a band..."

"Okay, Bella, I get it. We have a ton of work to do. However, I'll be there to help you. You don't have to do this alone," Edward said, rubbing my feet. "What did you and Esme and Alice decide on today?"

"We pretty figured out the colors that are going to be used throughout the whole wedding," I replied.

"Please tell me it's not pink. I hate pink," Edward grumbled.

"It's not pink. I said I wanted varying shades of purple with silver accents," I laughed. "I'm with you in the fact that I hate pink, too. When have you ever seen me in pink?"

"Um, never?" Edward responded.

"Exactly. Why would I want pink in our wedding? Blech," I shuddered. "I just still can't believe that we're getting married."

"Believe it, baby. I've known since that night at The Chapel," Edward murmured, as he leaned in to kiss me. His lips brushed over mine and I sighed, weaving my fingers into his newly shorn locks. Edward leaned down, gently pushing me down onto the couch. "I love kissing you, Bella."

## La Cantante

I wrapped one of my legs around his hips, pulling his growing erection to my body. He moaned and he swiveled his hips against my body. My tongue ran along Edward's lips, eliciting a growl from him. His arms wrapped around my waist, holding me close.

"Bella! Edward! Dinner's ready," Alice yelled as she bounded the stairs. "Oh, crap! I didn't see anything."

"Alice, it's fine," Edward grumbled, quickly sitting up, pulling me with him. "Nothing was happening. Just a heavy make out session."

"Okay, good. I love you, Edward, but I do not want to see your man parts. Ew," Alice said as she scrunched her nose.

"Alice, I don't want you to see my man parts, either," Edward laughed. "That would be all sorts of wrong."

"As I was saying, dinner's ready," Alice said as she darted up the stairs.

"To be continued later, beautiful?" Edward asked, wiggling his brows.

"Oh, yeah, handsome," I replied as I hopped off the couch. I grabbed his hand and heaved him off the leather sofa and we headed upstairs. We sat down at the kitchen table and tucked into a delicious dinner of lasagna, salad and garlic bread.

Before Edward and I left for our apartment, Esme and Carlisle wanted to give me my Christmas presents. Because Esme knew about my impending engagement, they got me my own Cullen Crest. Each Cullen had their own crest in the form of jewelry. Edward had a leather wristband that he wore occasionally. Alice wore hers as a choker. Esme and Carlisle wore theirs in their wedding bands. Esme had mine made as a pendant with a chunky silver chain. Edward helped me to put it on and I lightly ran my fingers over the pendant that lay on my neck. I chuckled as I already had my own crest and it was etched into my skin on my right hip. However, Carlisle and Esme didn't need to know this bit of information. I graciously thanked them for my pendant



## La Cantante

and hugged both of them. Alice had gotten me a bunch of clothes, saying she needed to update my wardrobe. She also said that she was going to organize my closet in the apartment since she didn't really get a chance to when we moved in. I invited Alice to come over anytime this coming week before school started.

After our gift exchange, Edward and I headed back to our apartment. I ended up falling asleep in the car as we drove home. I vaguely was aware of when Edward pulled into the parking garage under our apartment. "Bella, love, we're home," Edward said as he ghosted my fingers across my cheeks.

I blinked my eyes open and looked at my handsome fiancé. "Sorry about dozing off. I guess I'm a little jet lagged," I chuckled.

"No big deal, beautiful. I'm tired too," Edward smirked. "Let's get upstairs."

I nodded and got out of the car. Edward wrapped his arms around my waist and we walked up to our apartment. I unlocked the door and hung my coat up. Edward did the same after he closed the door behind him. I unzipped my boots and put them by the closet. He snuck up behind me and moved my hair off my neck. He began kissing my neck, licking the sensitive spot behind my ear. I angled my head to give him better access and he pulled my earlobe between his teeth, humming against my skin. "I need you, Edward," I breathed. "Please."

Edward smiled and ran his hands up and down my sides. "I always need you, Bella," Edward whispered in my ear. I turned around and moved my right hand up to his cheek and snaked my left hand around his waist. I stood on my tip toes and pressed a kiss to his lips. He met my kiss with fervor, lifting me up off the ground, causing me to wrap my legs around his waist. He carried me to our bedroom and laid me gently on our bed, hovering over me. He was pressing feather light kisses along my jaw and neck. I was squirming and moaning. "Edward," I begged.

"What is it, love?" he said against my skin.

"Please, I need to feel you," I said, reaching my hands into his hair. Edward reached the edge of my sweater with his fingers and slipped his hands underneath. His long, gentle fingers ran along my heated skin, causing me to whimper. I pushed his shoulders up and I lifted my sweater off my body, tossing it onto the floor. Edward looked at me with an animalistic look in his eyes. He crawled onto the bed, and moved further back until my back came to the pillows.

"Bella, you are so beautiful," he purred, leaning into kiss my neck. My hands fisted his shirt and began unbuttoning the buttons. He pulled away and gave a tug, effectively ripping the shirt apart. He shrugged out of the shirt and tossed it with my sweater. I whimpered at his actions, feeling my arousal seep into my panties. Edward leaned back down, pinning me with his lean, muscular body. I ran my fingernails along his smooth, soft skin of his back. I could feel the muscles strain and ripple under my touch. He found the edge of my leggings and he began peeling them from my legs. As he removed my leggings, he kissed down my neck, the swell of my breasts and along my abdomen. When he reached the edge of my lacy panties, he licked from hip bone to hip bone. He looked up at me and quirked a brow. He gave me a wicked grin and he ripped the panties from my body. I squeaked and I could feel myself get wetter. I fell back against the pillow and I tried to calm myself. Edward spread my legs and dove in to my moist, hot core. He flicked his tongue on my sensitive nub and plunged two fingers into me. My hips rolled at the touch and I stifled a scream. He hummed against my skin and curled his fingers in me. My body moved of its own volition. Edward pulled away and blew against my sex and I whimpered. He stared at my sex and he gave me a smirk.

"Edward, please," I begged.

"Please what, love?" he asked as he ran his fingers along my inner thighs.

"More. I need to feel more," I pleaded.

He leaned forward and ran his tongue along my slit, swirling it at my entrance. I ground my hips against his face and I could feel him smile. He slipped one finger into me and began pumping into my body. I rocked my hips against his

hand and I could feel my release He added another finger and moved his hand faster as he licked my clit furiously. He pushed one of my legs up and he moved at a different angle with his hands. My muscles clenched down around his fingers and my back arched off the bed. I was breathing heavily, moaning at the sensations that Edward caused. He kept his mouth attached to my nub until my body calmed down. He removed his fingers and I grabbed for his hand, sucking his fingers into my mouth. He moaned and his other hand moved to his belt.

I removed his fingers from my mouth and I moved my fingers to his button of his jeans. I unbuttoned his jeans and moved down the zipper of his fly. I pushed his jeans over his hips and he eased them down his legs. I pulled his hand and eased him down on the pillows. I grabbed my hair into a makeshift ponytail and I took his cock into my mouth. He moaned and his hands moved to my hair, holding it away from my face. With my hands, I pumped his dick and bobbed my head, swirling my tongue.

"Shit, baby. That feels so good," he breathed. I looked up at him and moved my hand to his balls, massaging them lightly. "Bella, I need to be inside you. Stop, baby."

I pulled away from my love and he gently pulled my face to his, kissing my swollen lips. I straddled his hips as he kissed me and positioned myself over his cock. I slowly eased my body over his, having him completely fill me. I moaned and my eyes rolled into the back of my head. Edward held onto my body and rocked my body against his. "Bella, you are so tight. Feels so good," he grunted.

I rotated my hips and leaned back against his legs. My hands moved to my breasts, which were still encased in my bra. I reached behind me and released them from their lacy prison. Edward sat up and took of my breasts into his mouth, licking my nipple. He took the other breast in his hand and he squeezed gently. "Oh, Edward," I moaned as I fisted his hair. I pushed him down against the pillows and grabbed his hands, lacing my fingers with his. I forced his arms above his head and I began riding him, hard.

"Fuck, baby. Don't stop. You feel amazing," Edward breathed. He bucked his hips at the same rhythm that I rode his huge cock. I leaned down and sucked on his neck, right above his jugular vein. He moaned loudly and I moved faster. Edward rolled his hips and he flipped us so he was on top. His eyes were feral and he put one of my legs onto his shoulder. He sat back on his haunches and he pounded into me. I screamed. "Do you like that, Bella? Do you like it when I drive into you?" he growled.

"Oh, God, yes Edward. Harder," I pleaded. He angled his hips and he hit a different spot, deeper than he ever hit before. My eyes clamped shut and I could feel my body tense up.

"That's it, baby. Come for me. I want to feel you come around my cock," Edward grunted. "I love when you come. I love you so much."

At his words, my muscles clenched around him and I arched my body off the bed. Edward pumped into me several times before he spilled into my body with a roar. Edward fell forward, catching himself on his hands before he squashed me. He was breathing heavily and his body was covered in a sheen of sweat. He rolled away and he pulled out of my body. We both whimpered. "I love you, Edward," I rasped.

"I love you more, beautiful. You are going to be the death of me," he chuckled. "But what a way to go."

"I was about to say the same thing," I giggled. I laid my head onto his sweaty chest and pressed a kiss on his swan tattoo. He kissed my head and wrapped his arms around me. He lightly scratched my back with his fingertips and I purred at his gentle touch. My eyes began to droop and I yawned against his chest.

"Tired, baby?" Edward asked, his own voice rough with exhaustion.

I nodded. Edward got up and turned down the bed and crawled under the sheets. I followed suit and resumed my spot on his chest. My eyes got heavier and before I knew it, I was dead to the world, curled up against my love.

## La Cantante

**A/N: A light fluffy chapter...Up next, school resumes, Bella and girls take self defense classes and an introduction of a new character.**

# Back to School

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine! Nearly 200 reviews. Thank you so much!*

## Chapter 55: Back to School

### EPOV

The rest of our winter break went by quickly. It's amazing that during the school year, the days we're actually in school go by so slowly. The breaks go by incredibly fast. I wanted to spend more time with my fiancée.

*My fiancée. So happy.*

However, if you want to be a teacher, you have to go to college. As much as I wanted to spend the next eight months with Bella in our bed, happily ensconced in each other's arms, it wasn't a possibility. At least, we were living together and things could not be going any better in that realm. Bella was afraid of us getting sick of each other if we lived together, but that was never the case. We each did our own things when we wanted to. We were together when we wanted to be. The best part of living together, aside from Bella's cooking, was being able to sleep in each other's arms every night. I loved that. I slept so poorly while Bella was in Seattle. I was so used to feeling her against my chest as she slept. I resorted in putting one of her t-shirts onto a pillow and sleeping on that to try and trick my body that Bella was with me. It didn't work.

On Saturday evening before school started, almost everyone, with the exception of Jasper, was back on campus. Bella told everyone to come to our apartment for some dinner and relaxation before the new semester began. Rosalie and Alice came over first, carrying a cake. Rose told us that Emmett

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was getting some provisions in the form of beer and would be at our apartment shortly. Bella made some chicken parmesan and pasta for dinner. She set out the food and told everyone to dig in, buffet style. Emmett buzzed the apartment a few minutes later. I let him in and gave him a plate. He handed me two cases of beer for us and handed me some foofy drinks for the girls. I tossed the beer and the drinks into the fridge. I made myself a plate and sat down in the living room, on the floor near Bella's feet. We all ate in comfortable silence, enjoying Bella's delicious meal.

"Bella, we may have to make this a weekly tradition," Emmett said with a mouthful of pasta.

"What?" she asked as she took a sip of some water.

"Having dinner at the mini-Cullen Castle," he replied.

"Oh, that's cool. I like cooking. You okay with that, Edward?" she asked as she scratched my head. I swallowed my bite of chicken and nodded, giving her a lopsided smirk.

"We'll even pitch in some money for the groceries for our dinner," Rosalie said with a smile.

"Rose, that's not necessary," I said.

"If we're mooching off you, the least we can do is pay you for the groceries," Rose replied. Alice and Emmett nodded.

"How about you just provide the alcohol and we're good," I suggested. "I have a few months before I can legally purchase it."

"Done, Cullen," Emmett said, holding out a fist. I bumped it with my own and went back to my dinner.

"We're still going to pay you for the groceries. While you might like the beer, Bella might not," Alice chided.

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I turned and looked at my fiancée and she gave me the bitch brow. "Sorry, baby."

"It's no big deal, Edward. Emmett, you can buy me some wine when you bring Edward his beer," Bella responded. "Nothing expensive. I use it to cook."

"You got it, Isabelly."

Bella got up and began clearing plates that were done and placed them in the kitchen. Alice and Rose did the same. Rose quirked a brow at Emmett and he gave her a sweet smile. She rolled her eyes and smacked him upside the head. After the plates were cleared and put into the dishwasher, the girls settled back onto the couch. I leaned against Bella's legs and she idly played with my hair. I almost felt like purring, it felt so good. I probably had a shit-eating grin on my face.

"Rose? Alice?" Bella asked.

"What's up?" Alice asked.

"I have a question to ask both of you. I was wondering if you both would stand up for the wedding?" Bella asked.

They both squealed and said that they would. Emmett held his hands up to his ears, scrunching his face.

"There's more," Bella said.

"What, Bella?" Rosalie asked.

"Would both of you be my maids of honor? I feel close to both you like sisters and I can't choose between the two of you," Bella replied sheepishly.

"Of course, Bella," they responded in unison. Rose and Alice shared a look and then broke into giggles.



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"Hey, Em?" I asked.

"I'd be honored, Cullen," Emmett said with a grin.

"You don't even know what I'm going to ask," I laughed.

"Oh. Yes, Edward?"

"Can you grab me a beer?" I snorted.

"You suck, Edward," Emmett said as he threw a pillow at my head.

"Seriously. Get me a beer? I'm comfortable," I said, putting the pillow behind my head against Bella's legs. I could feel her giggling behind me.

Emmett grumbled and got up. He stomped to the kitchen and grabbed two beers. He slammed my beer on the table in front of me and then huffed onto the couch and opened his.

"Hey, Em?" I asked.

"If you want something else, get it yourself," he barked.

"Would you be my best man?" I said, a grin spreading over my face.

He spit out his beer across the room, covering Rosalie. She screeched and slapped him. "Emmett McCarty Swan! You are a pig!" Rose stomped into the bathroom and we could hear her try to clean off the beer from her clothes and face.

Bella fell over in a hysterical fit of giggles. "Oh, this hurts but it's so funny!"

Alice had her tinkling laugh and she leaned against Bella. Things began to die down until Alice snorted, when the laughter returned full force. Rose returned and sat next to Bella, giving Emmett the stink eye. We quickly sobered up and looked at Emmett expectantly.

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"Well?" I pressed.

"Just because you were a douche, I should say no. However, I won't. I'd be happy to be your best man. Trust me when I say that you'll get payback when your bachelor party comes around," Emmett warned.

"Understood, Emmett," I replied.

"So, what classes is everyone taking?" Alice asked, abruptly changing the subject.

"Edward and I in almost all of the same classes," Bella explained. "There's only one class that we're not in together. Edward is taking introduction to education and I'm taking a science course. Biology, I think. I was signed up for it in the fall, but I dropped before the beginning of the semester because I had an overload."

"What classes are you taking, specifically," Rose pressed.

"Music Theory II and Aural Harmony II, Music Literature, Educational Psychology, University Singers, Emerson Express and Sociology," I answered. "It's going to be a busy semester. How about everyone else?"

"I'm taking a Fashion Design class, Business Law, Biology, Accounting and an Excel class in addition to University Singers," Alice replied.

"Who's your biology professor?" Bella asked.

"Timmerman?"

"Yay! We're in biology together," Bella smiled. "At least I'll have a lab partner."

"I'm taking a Human Anatomy class, Eastern Religion class, Anthropology, Advanced Athletic Training, Computer Graphic Design and photography," Emmett said.

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"That's an interesting mix of classes, Em," Bella said with a quirked brow.

"I hit most of my major classes last year and I can only take them when they're offered. I have to take a few over the summer in order to graduate on time. However, in order to keep my scholarship, I have to maintain a full course load. By the time I graduate, I'll have a double major in Athletic Training and Computer Graphic Design."

"Interesting," Bella replied. "How about you, Rose?"

"I'm taking the same Computer Graphic Design class as Emmett. I'm also in Advanced Accounting, American Literature, Advanced Motors and Science, Chemistry, and Music Literature. I think I'm in the same class as you and Edward," Rose told Bella. "I also signed up for a self defense seminar. I took the liberty of signing both of you up with me."

"When is the seminar?" asked Alice.

"It's on Tuesdays from 7-9 for four weeks starting on January 11th," Rose explained. "Are you guys cool with that?"

"That's awesome, Rose. I was actually going to sign up for self defense classes through the police station. Especially since what happened over the break," Bella replied with a sad smile. "You saved me a phone call."

"Why can't we go?" Emmett whined.

"It's self defense for *women*," Rose giggled. "The last time I checked, you are a guy. You have a penis."

"I can wear a wig and speak like a girl," Emmett said as he squeaked his voice.

"Emmett, you'd make an ugly woman," I laughed.

"Well, Edward, you'd make a great woman. You're so pretty," Emmett said as he fluttered his eyelashes.

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"You're full of shit, Emmaline," I teased.

"Whatever, Edwina," Emmett guffawed.

"Now, boys. Behave yourselves or we'll have to put you in time out," Rose giggled.

Emmett and I both pouted and I crossed my arms petulantly across my chest. Emmett stuck his tongue out at me and I flipped him off. Bella smacked my head and gave me the 'teacher' glare. "Edward Anthony."

"Isabella Marie," I countered. "Don't look at me in that tone of voice."

She rolled her eyes and hopped off the couch. "Movie, anyone?"

"Do you have *Transformers*?" Emmett asked. Bella turned and pulled it out. She set it up in the DVD player and went to the kitchen to get some refreshments. She grabbed two more beers for Emmett and I and some of the foofy drinks for Rose, Alice and herself. I put myself on the couch and Bella sat next to me, curled against my side. I pressed play and the movie began. A couple of hours later, the movie was over and our guests decided to head back to the dorms. Bella was paranoid that Emmett was too drunk to drive, but he insisted that he was fine. Bella busied herself with cleaning up until she received a phone call from both Emmett and Rose saying they got home safely.

After we got their phone calls, Bella and I settled into bed. She kissed me for a few moments before she cuddled against my chest. Her breathing evened out and she was asleep. I pressed a kiss to her forehead and I fell asleep soon after.

xx LC xx

Sunday was quiet. Bella and I were in denial that school was starting the next day. I know that I didn't want to go. However, we made a trip to campus and went to go pick up our books for our classes. Bella was grumbling about the cost of the books that we had to buy, in addition to a set of CDs for music literature. We decided to get one set of CDs and share between the two of us.

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We also got one music literature book. I paid for the CDs and the book, much to Bella's chagrin. She was still leery about the money I spent on her. If she only knew how much her engagement ring cost, she'd have a heart attack.

Bella and I went to bed early on Sunday evening, preparing for our early morning of Music Theory II. Larry was still teaching the class and I was honestly excited to see him. As much as I grumbled about going back to school, I was looking forward to my classes. I was happy to begin my new major of being a music education major and having a majority of my classes with my fiancée.

The alarm went off early and I slipped out of bed. I hopped into the shower and quickly hosed off my body and washed my hair. I exited the shower and quickly shaved my face. I was patting my face with some aftershave when Bella padded into the bathroom and put her arms around my waist. Her eyes were still half closed and she groaned against my back. "What's wrong, beautiful?"

"Too early. Why? Why do they make Music Theory at 7:30 in the fricking morning?" she grumbled.

"To weed out the faint of heart," I replied. "I'm done. Get ready, love."

She nodded and turned to the sink and washed her face. I walked out of the bathroom, shutting the door behind me. I walked to our closet and picked out the clothes that I wanted to wear. I took out a pair of dark, distressed jeans, a blue button-down shirt and a red and blue sweater that Alice got me for Christmas. I also grabbed my Doc Martens and walked to the bedroom. I tossed my clothes onto the chair near the bathroom and quickly made the bed. I got a pair of boxers from the dresser and slipped them on. I pulled on my jeans and slid on my shirt and sweater. I sprayed some cologne and ran some pomade through my hair.

I walked into the kitchen and poured both Bella and I some coffee into our travel mugs. I dug through the pantry and took out two packages of Pop Tarts and tossed them into the microwave. I carried the coffee and the Pop Tarts to

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the bedroom. Bella was in the closet, rifling through her clothes, choosing what she wanted to wear.

"Bella, I have breakfast for you on the dresser," I said.

She poked her head out and she looked a bit more awake. "Thanks, Edward. You're the best."

"I try, baby," I giggled. I scarfed down my own breakfast and I went into the office and grabbed my messenger bag and slipped my laptop into it. I also got my books for my classes today and put them in the bag as well. "Bella? Do you want me to get your books together for your classes today?"

"That would be awesome, Edward," she called from the bedroom. I took out her bag and tossed in her laptop and books. I picked up both bags and put them by the door. Bella walked out a few moments later, carrying the plate I had put her breakfast on. She ran it under some water and put it into the dishwasher. Bella was wearing a pair of dark, skinny jeans tucked into her black boots with a black sweater and a red camisole. Her hair was wavy and hung down over her shoulders. She wore her glasses and her Cullen Crest around her neck, along with her engagement ring on her finger. "You ready, handsome?"

"As I'll ever be," I replied as I gave her a lopsided smirk. Bella slipped on her black and white checked winter coat, red scarf, hat and gloves. I pulled on my black pea coat, blue scarf and leather gloves. I picked up my keys and slipped my wallet into my back pocket. We rode the elevator down to the car and I tossed the bags into the back seat and we headed to campus. I parked the car on the street near Brandon Hall, in one of the commuter spots. I carried our bags up to our music theory classroom and we settled into our usual seats in the back of the room. Bella took out her staff paper, notebook, textbook and pencil, as I did the same.

Our class was essentially the same as our first semester, in regards to attendance. There was a few students that were added who had didn't do well in the class the first time around. They were the 'jazzers' who spent more time toking it up than studying. Larry and a red-headed woman walked into the class

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and began distributing the class syllabus. Bella and I received ours and quickly flipped through it.

"Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Dr. Laurent Meyers. I prefer to be called Larry, especially at the crack of dawn. I want to introduce to you my new teaching assistant, Victoria St. Peters. She's a transfer student from NYU working on her thesis for her doctorate in music therapy. She'll be assisted in classroom instruction, grading papers and answering questions," Larry said with a tight smile.

Bella and I shared a wary look. We were both apprehensive of the teaching assistants since the incident with James. Larry broke us from our reverie and explained the syllabus, major projects and assignments. It looked like it was going to be fun class. We were dismissed a little early and we headed to our next class which was Educational Psychology. I had taken Introduction to Psychology as a freshman and I was able to get into Bella's section.

Like in Music Theory, we settled near the back of the classroom. A short pudgy man walked in with a beat up briefcase and a handful of papers. He put the briefcase and the papers on the desk in the front of the room, but they fell off, scattering all over the floor. He huffed and bent down to pick them up. He slammed them onto the desk and pinched the bridge of his nose. He looked like he was muttering something to himself as he turned to face us.

"Good morning everyone. My name is Dr. Julian Hafenrichter and I'm your Educational Psychology professor," he said quietly. He distributed the syllabus and explained his expectations and assignments. He then began reviewing the basics of psychology and we scribbled down the notes. I could barely read my own writing because he was talking so quickly. A few students asked him to slow down and he did, for a few moments, then returned to his breakneck speed. I decided that I would bring a voice recorder for the next class in case I miss anything.

After psychology, Bella and I went our separate ways. She went to biology and I went my Introduction to Education course. I ended up having the same professor that Bella had in the fall. She was really nice and she knew her stuff.

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At the end of class, she asked me to stay behind. Emerson was a smaller university and the professors talked. I'm assuming it had something to do with Bella.

"Mr. Cullen?" she asked.

"Yes, Dr. Seppela," I responded as I walked to her desk.

"I know that you and Bella Swan are together. She didn't pick up her final project and I was wondering if you could give it to her. There's a note for her in the assessment," Dr. Seppela stated.

I held my hand out and she handed me a large envelope that held a binder. "I'll give it to her when I see her next," I said with a smile. "Thank you."

"No, thank you, Mr. Cullen," she grinned. "I look forward to working with you. Dr. Santiago speaks very highly of you. He says you'll make a fine educator."

I blushed and chuckled nervously. "Thank you, Dr. Seppela. I'll see you next class."

"Have a good day, Mr. Cullen."

I picked up my bag and the envelope with Bella's project and walked to University Singers. I took my usual seat and waited for Bella and the rest of the gang. As I waited for the rest of the group to come in, I heard the most annoying sound.

"Hello, Edward."

*Fuck. My. Life.*

"Tanya," I seethed. "What are you doing here?"

"Eleazar offered me a spot in University Singers when Senna had to drop out of school because of a problem," Tanya said as she sidled up next to me. "I



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happily took it. I really enjoy Concert Choir, but to be a part of the prestigious University Singers is a dream come true. I get to spend my time with you," she flirted.

"Tanya, back off. I've told you once and I'll tell you again, I'm not interested. Actually, I'm off the market. Permanently."

"Why? Did you knock up your little mouse?" Tanya pouted.

"No. We got engaged," I said as I put my folder on my lap.

"No, you didn't. You're lying, Edward," she laughed.

"No, he isn't, bitch," Bella fumed. "See the bling? Get your fake, artificial acrylic nails out of my fiancée, or my boot will be attached to your ass."

"That's not real. It's totally fake," Tanya giggled.

"Tanya, it's not. It's a D-flawless diamond, two carats. Worth..."

"Edward, don't tell Tanya how much you spent on me. It'll make her jealous," Bella said as she sat on my lap.

"Good point, baby," I replied as I kissed her pouty lips. "However, I think she was just after me for my money."

"I was not, Edward," Tanya defended.

"Yes, you were. Whenever we went out, I always paid. You never once offered. You always asked to go to the most expensive restaurants and concerts," I grumbled.

"It's not like you're poor, Edward," she countered.

"That's not the point, Tanya. There's more to me than a pretty face and a hefty wallet," I said angrily. "You may want to take a seat. Class is almost ready to

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begin."

Tanya rolled her eyes and sauntered to the back of the choir room. I looked at my Bella and she was shooting daggers with her eyes at Tanya. I gently scratched her back and kissed her neck. She closed her eyes and took a few deep breaths before she got off my lap. She took a seat to my right, linking her fingers with mine. By the time Tanya had sat in her seat, Rosalie and Jasper had walked in sat down in front of Bella and I. Alice raced in a few minutes later, plopping down next to me.

"I'm soooooo going to hate biology," Alice whined. Bella snickered next to me and shook her head.

"What's wrong, Pixie?" I asked, ruffling her hair.

"Stop that, Green-Eyed Freak," Alice admonished. "We have to dissect a cat. A CAT! I can't dissect a cat. They're so cute."

"Alice, I had to dissect a cat when I was in biology. It's not that bad. The fur is already gone," I explained.

"It's a *CAT!*"

"What's a cat, Miss Cullen?" Eleazar laughed.

"Nothing. Sorry, Eleazar. I'm just stressing about one of my classes," Alice said as she sat down.

"Biology?" Eleazar asked as he quirked a brow.

"Yes, sir. They're making us dissect a cat," she moaned.

"I'm certain you'll be fine, Miss Cullen," Eleazar snickered. He stood on the podium and began warm ups. After warm ups he gestured to his folder and we opened ours. Inside, we found the music for Mozart's *Requiem*, the piece we were singing in Italy with Eleazar's colleague, Caius D'Angelo. We spent the

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better part of rehearsal focusing on learning the opening movement. We also spent some time on another piece, "Prayer for the Children" which we started in the fall but didn't perform.

After rehearsal, we all headed to The Cage and ate lunch together. Jasper congratulated Bella and I on our engagement. I asked him to be 'co-best man' with Emmett. As we sat down to eat our lunch, Emmett came into The Cage and plopped down. He swiped a few fries from Rose's lunch and she swatted him away. Rose and Alice started talking about some drama in their new dorm as I spoke up about a rehearsal schedule for Breaking Midnight. We decided on having rehearsal on Wednesday as Bella and the girls had their self defense seminar on Tuesday and we had Express rehearsal on Thursday. Kellan had called and asked us to perform on Friday, so we needed to rehearse and choose music.

Bella had to make a quick stop at the bookstore before we left The Cage. The bookstore was located in the basement in the same building. She grabbed her wallet and darted off. She returned a few minutes later with a bag in her hands. "What did you get, baby?"

"I needed a notebook for biology," Bella answered. "I'm being lazy and not wanting to go to the grocery store. Though, we do need food."

I chuckled and nodded. "We can head to Super Target after dinner tonight, okay?"

"Sounds good to me. I need to take a nap," Bella yawned. She quirked a brow and gave me a secret smile.

"Yeah, me too. I'm feeling a bit under the weather. We'll see you guys tomorrow," I said as I got up out of my chair, picking up my bag. I dug around in my pockets and pulled out my keys. Bella and I laced fingers and we walked to the car and dashed home to take our 'nap.' What a nap it was, all over our apartment.

*I'm engaged to a sex goddess.*

**A/N: Short, filler chapter. Up next, self defense seminar and another gig at Eclipse. I'm currently snowbound so I may update twice. Blizzard 2011 is at full force!**

# Self Defense

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 56: Self Defense

### BPOV

I've come to the conclusion that going to grocery store with Edward was akin to going to a toy store with a toddler. Everything he saw, he needed to get. Almost all of it was unhealthy and processed. I gawked at him and was amazed that he had the physique he did. He chuckled and said that he has awesome metabolism. I smacked him and put all of the unhealthy, nasty food back on the shelves and got food that wasn't orange or filled with preservatives. Edward pouted like a child. However, I did manage to slip the ingredients for some Bella brownies for my man-child of a fiancé.

I settled into the couch and read my biology book for our first assignment. Edward had his head in my lap as he read his, or rather, my education textbook. As I read, I idly ran my fingers through his hair. He grabbed my hand and pressed a kiss into my palm, lightly nibbling it. "I love you, beautiful," Edward said as he looked up at me.

"I love you, too, baby," I said as I leaned down and kissed his nose. "How did you like your education class?"

"It was good. Actually, I have Dr. Seppela," Edward replied. "Speaking of which, I forgot to give this to you after University Singers." Edward hopped up and dashed to his bag. He pulled out a large envelope. He handed it to me. "Dr. Seppela asked me to give you your final project from last semester."

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"Oh, thanks," I said, surprised. I pulled out the binder from the envelope and looked at the grade sheet tucked into the front pocket. I had gotten a perfect score and Dr. Seppela asked if she could use my unit project as an example for the music education majors as it was very well thought out and utilized a great deal of differentiation. I smiled and started bouncing on the couch.

"What is it, baby?" Edward asked he sat down next to me, curling his long legs under his body. I handed the grade sheet and he scanned over it. His face broke into a huge grin and he gathered me into his arms. "You are amazing, Bella. I'm so proud of you."

"I'm going to print off another copy of the project and she can have that one. Can you bring the project to her the next day you have class?" I asked.

"Of course, my love," Edward said as he kissed my lips. He pulled away, but I grabbed his face, keeping it attached to mine. I ran my tongue along his bottom lip and gently pushed him back onto the couch. "Bella, you are insatiable."

"Only for you, Edward. Shut up and kiss me," I said against his lips.

"Gladly," he replied as he wrapped his arms around my waist and held me to his muscular chest. We made out for a few minutes. I pulled away and got up, leaving a very frustrated Edward on the couch. "Where are you going? You can't just get me all riled up and leave me like that."

"To print out my project, handsome. You have hands," I giggled.

"You just did *not* insinuate I masturbate to deal with my problem that *you* caused," Edward said as he leaned back on his elbows.

"I did insinuate that, Edward. After all of the sexing we did today, I'm a little sore. Supercrack rode me hard," I snorted.

"Evil woman," Edward said as he narrowed his eyes.

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"I know," I said as I skipped to the office to print my project and put it into a binder. I was almost done when I noticed Edward leaning against the doorframe of the office. "Yes, Edward?"

"Nothing, beautiful. Just waiting for you to finish what you started," he stated simply. I could see the bulge in his pants. It was smaller, but still predominant.

"What would you have me do, Edward? If you could have me do anything?" I asked innocently.

"There isn't much that we haven't done, baby. Especially today," he smirked.

I put the completed binder on the desk. I looked at my fiancé and my eyes darkened and my stance straightened. I slinked over to Edward and he was still looking at me, leaning against the door frame. I grabbed his shirt and shoved him against the wall inside of the office. His eyes widened and he opened his mouth. I held my finger to his mouth. I quirked a brow, shaking my head 'no.' I ran my finger over his soft lips. Edward's mouth opened and his breath picked up. I pulled his bottom lip down, and I leaned up capturing it with my teeth. I sucked on his lip and his hands went to wrap around my waist. I pulled away so he couldn't hold me. I reached down to the buckle of Edward's jeans. I quickly undid the buckle and unbuttoned his jeans. I palmed his growing erection in my hand.

"Do you want my mouth around your cock, Edward?" I purred. He nodded and I unzipped his fly and sank to my knees. I pulled out his glorious cock and studied. I ran my hand along the top, spreading the precum that had accumulated there. I looked up at Edward's face. His mouth was slightly open and his chest was heaving. His eyes were transfixed on what I was about to do. I ran the tip of my tongue the entire length of his shaft. He shuddered and his eyes clamped shut. I smiled and I swirled my tongue around the tip of his cock as I massaged his balls.

His hands moved to my hair and they weaved into my long, chestnut strands. He looked back down at me, his eyes pleading with me. I took his cock into my mouth, plunging it as far as it would go. One of my hands moved around his

## La Cantante

thigh and rested on his ass. I bobbed my head and licked his cock. With my other hand, I pumped in the same rhythm as my head. Edward's hands tightened against my hair and I could feel him tense up. I scraped my teeth along the bottom of his shaft and his breath hitched. I moved my head faster and soon a warm spray of his cum streamed down my throat as his head fell back against the wall with a loud thud. I swallowed all that he had to offer and withdrew my mouth from his dick. Edward slid down the wall and his legs were on either side of me. He looked at me with a sexy grin. "Can I talk now?"

"Yes, Edward."

"I will never get tired of that. You are so good at giving me head," he said as he leaned forward, kissing my lips. His tongue swept inside my mouth and he hummed. "I can taste myself on you. It's a potent combination."

"You are quite delectable, Edward," I said against his lips. "I'm going to shower and then I'm heading to bed."

"I need to regain my strength. You swallowed all of mine," Edward said as he leaned back against the wall, tucking his now flaccid dick into his jeans. I gave him a satisfied smirk and I hopped up, kissing his head before taking my shower.

xx LC xx

Aural Harmony was going to be challenging this semester. Most of what we worked on last semester was pretty diatonic. Now, we're working with more accidentals and while I had no issues, Edward had a look of absolute dread on his face. He could play the piano like nobody's business. He could sight read anything you put in front of him on the piano. However, put a piece of music where he had to sight read as a singer and he floundered. Part of it was he relied on the piano keyboard too much to get the intervals for the pieces we sang. He needed to become more comfortable with his ear. Edward begged me to help him with identifying intervals and I promised I'd work with him.



## La Cantante

Edward and I had about an hour before our music literature class, so we headed to The Cage for some breakfast. Rosalie sauntered in and joined us. "Morning, kids. How was your 'nap' yesterday?"

"Were we that obvious?" I asked.

"Oh, yeah. I think a blind man could see what you guys wanted to do," Rosalie giggled. "However, it's all good. Are you ready for our self defense seminar tonight, Bella?"

"Yes and no. Yes, because it's something that I need to know. No, because I just know that I'm going to get injured," I snorted.

"With that attitude, you will. Just pretend it's Jacob and you're crushing his balls with your hands," Rosalie seethed.

"Remind me to never meet you in a dark alley, Rose. You're kind of scary," Edward said nervously.

"Don't make me do kung fu on you, Cullen," she said as she started acting like a ninja. "Hwhah...yah!"

"Did you just karate chop me?" Edward guffawed.

"Yes, I did. My kung fu is strong," Rose said as she bowed.

"Is this what I get to look forward to with you and Alice?" I giggled.

"Oh, she's worse. Be afraid. Be very afraid," Rose chortled.

We finished our breakfast and headed back over to Brandon and went to the room where Edward and I usually have Music Theory. We settled in our usual seats and Rose was on my right. I took out my notebook and the music lit book that Edward and I shared. I placed it on my bag in between us. It surprised us when Eleazar walked in and placed his books on the podium in the front of the room.

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"Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Dr. Eleazar Santiago and I'll be your professor for Music Literature. Originally, it was supposed to be one of my other colleagues, but they were forced to take an emergency leave of absence and I was asked to step in. I've taught the class before and I look forward to working with you. I see some familiar faces, but most of you are new. As I introduce myself, I'm going to ask a few of my familiar faces to help me out. Bella and Edward, can you pass out the syllabi?"

We nodded and got up to distribute the syllabi for the class. We left the extras on the desk near Eleazar and walked back to our seats. Eleazar informed us that there was no major paper. We would be taking periodic tests throughout the semester. In the tests, we also had a listening portion so we needed to be familiar with the pieces that we were covering. He then began his lecture on Gregorian chant and the joys of *numes* or early notes. We took fastidious notes, thoroughly enjoying the topic and the music that Eleazar played during class. He dismissed class and I went to my voice lesson. An hour later, I emerged to find Edward sitting outside with a huge grin on his face.

"Were you sitting out here the entire time I was in my lesson?" I chastised.

"No. I went and I practiced some piano pieces for my recital I'm giving in the spring. With about five minutes left in the hour, I headed up to wait for you. You sound like an angel, beautiful," Edward said as he snaked his arms around my waist, holding me to his chest. I laid my hands on his pectorals and lightly scratched my fingers. I focused my eyes on Edward's sweater, a blush creeping across my cheeks. He tipped my chin up to look at him. His deep, green eyes showing sincerity and love. "I mean it, baby. You sound like an angel. My angel. My singer."

"Thank you, Edward. I truly appreciate it. You also have an amazing voice, too," I said, gazing into his piercing eyes.

"I'm okay. You're the talent in this relationship, at least when it comes to singing. You ready to head to sociology?" he grimaced.

## La Cantante

"No. Not really. I'd rather focus all of my attention on music and not this core academic class crap," I grumbled as I pressed my forehead to Edward's chest.

"That's how I felt about all my pre-med classes. I'm actually enjoying my non-music classes more now that I'm a music education major because there's really no pressure for me to succeed. However, I'll still do well because I'm anal like that," Edward said with a shrug.

"Yeah, okay, Mr. Dean's List," I chuckled.

"Well, excuse me for getting a 4.0 GPA," he chortled as we walked down the stairs. "So did you."

"I know. I'm just giving you shit," I giggled as we walked to Facinelli. It had started snowing and I pulled on my red beanie over my head. Edward popped his collar and held out his arm for me to grab on to. I latched on and we walked briskly to Sociology.

As suspected, sociology was boring. Watching paint dry would have been more interesting. However, it would be an easy class. We just needed to show up for class and take the tests and all would be 'hunky dory' as the professor said. Edward drove us back to our apartment so we could eat a late lunch and do some studying before I went to my self defense seminar.

I threw together a quick stir fry and we ate in a companionable silence. After our lunch/dinner, Edward cleared the dishes and put them into the dishwasher. I went into the bedroom and changed into some more comfortable clothes for the seminar. I grabbed a pair of black yoga pants and a bright yellow shirt with a smiley face on it. I braided my hair and picked up my running shoes from the closet. I went to the dresser and took out a pair of socks and slipped them on my feet. I padded to the office and roused the computer on the desk. I logged into my email and I found a new email there from someone I didn't recognize. I was hesitant to open it, but I did anyway.

*To: Isabella Swan*

## La Cantante

*From: Emily*

*Re: Beware*

*Dear Isabella,*

*You don't know me and probably after I tell you what I have to say, you'll probably hate me. I don't blame you. Anyhow, you should know that Jacob Black is still alive. The Forks Police Department ruled him dead, but he's not. I've actually spoken with the acting chief of the department and told him this information. However, when he went to arrest Jacob, he'd already fled from his hiding spot.*

*He's coming to you. He cannot get over you. I don't know why, but he can't. There is an active warrant out for his arrest based on your complaint and if he crosses over state lines, the FBI will be involved. I don't want you hurt, Isabella. I could not live with that on my conscious.*

*I'm so sorry for the pain that you are enduring and I wish I could do more. However, warning you about Jacob and his plans to find you is the best I can do.*

*My sincerest apologies,*

*Emily Uley*

"Edward. EDWARD! EDWARD!" I yelled, increasing in panic.

He sprinted through the door and found me on the bed in the office, curled up in a tight ball, rocking. "Baby, what is it? What's wrong?" I pointed to the computer and he turned. He quickly read the information on the screen and he picked up a vase on the edge of the desk and chucked it across the room causing it to shatter against the wall. I whimpered and moved away from him. He looked at me and he crossed over to the bed, "I'm so sorry, Bella. I'm just so infuriated. I thought we were through with this fuckhead."

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I nodded and still clutched my legs, rocking against the bed. Edward gingerly sat down on the bed and looked at me sheepishly. I got up calmly and walked into our bedroom. Edward followed me and sat down on our bed. I went and grabbed an ativan. I used a pill cutter and split the pill in half and popped it in my mouth. I leaned on my hands and took a few breaths, willing my body to calm down. I turned and looked at a repentant Edward sitting on the bed. I crawled onto the bed and picked up one of his hands. His eyes met mine and they were filled with sadness, anger and shame. "Edward, it's okay. It just startled me, that's all," I said quietly, trying to stop my voice from wavering.

Edward wrapped his arms around my waist and pulled me against his chest as he lay down on the bed. He lightly stroked my hair as I let my emotions bubble to the surface. He held me as I cried against his chest. I cried for the fact that Jacob would never let me go. I cried that Emily was placed in such a horrendous position. I cried that I was powerless against this whole situation.

I managed to gather myself and I sat up. Edward looked at me warily and I wiped my cheeks. "We probably need to inform Detectives' Raisor and Lutz. They need to be aware of the situation. Can we go to the police station after University Singers before our rehearsal?" I asked.

"Of course, love," Edward said sadly.

"I've gotta go. Can I borrow your car? I don't want to walk to campus," I said quietly.

"Of course. Actually, here's a key for you. You can use it whenever you want. You don't need to ask. I've had your name added to the title and insurance," Edward explained. He handed me a key. I gave him a pointed look as I attached it to my apartment keys and I gave him a weak smile. He tucked a piece of hair that fell out of my braid and he pressed a tender kiss against my forehead. "I love you, Bella. I'm sorry I lost my temper."

"It's alright. Can you just pick up the mess?" I asked.

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"I was planning on it. Have fun at the seminar. Learn some good kung fu," Edward joked lightly.

"Be prepared for me to kick your ass, Cullen," I said. I karate chopped his shoulder and neatly dodged it. I pinched his side and slipped out of his reach. His eyes narrowed and I gave him a wave as I left. I put on my coat and my shoes. I picked up my keys and purse before heading out the door. I took the elevator down to the parking garage. I got into the Soccer Mobile and brought the seat closer to the pedals. I eased out of the parking spot and drove to the athletic facility where the seminar was being held. I parked the car as close to the entrance as possible and I dashed to the room. Rose and Alice were already there.

"Where were you, Bella?" Alice chided.

"Drama. I'll tell you after the seminar," I responded as I shrugged off my coat and hung it on a hanger.

We sat down on the mats that were set out in the large room. In walked a large, burly man with short black hair and chocolate skin. He looked menacing until he broke into a smile. "Good evening, ladies. My name is Stephen and I'll be your self defense instructor. Over the next four weeks, we'll be focusing on unarmed self defense techniques, in addition to some other techniques that don't utilize physical violence. However, as women, it is important to know that your physical stature means nothing when it comes to self defense. It's where you focus your attack that matters. Before we do any sparring, let's learn some basic offensive and defensive postures."

We stood up and Stephen led us in some basic stretching exercises. After he led us through the stretches, he talked us through some different defensive moves. We took a brief break and then he moved on to some offensive attacks. He laughed when he brought up *Miss Congeniality* but her words for 'SING' were accurate. The most effective points of attack, especially for a woman were the solar plexus, instep, nose and groin. He showed us different attacks for each point before dismissing us for the evening. As we gathered our coats, Alice and Rose looked at me with looks of concern.

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"Okay, spill it, Swan. You look like you've been crying," Alice said as she put her arms around me.

"That's because I was. I got an email today from home. You know how the cops thought that Jacob was dead after jumping off the cliff?" I asked. Rose and Alice nodded. "Well, he's not. He's hunting for me. Emily, the girl who sent the email, said that he's determined to find me and make me his. She told the cops, but Jacob had already fled. I'm meeting with the detectives who have been working on the case here tomorrow after our classes."

"Fucking Jacob. I hate him. He's such a fucking asshat," Rose seethed. "Reminds me of Royce."

"We can use our kung fu on him, Bella. His balls are toast," Alice said as she began making ninja poses. "Come on, let's get some ice cream. We need it after this."

I nodded and dangled my keys. They both smiled and we darted out to Edward's car. They piled in and we went a local ice cream parlor that specialized in adding cookie dough with the ice cream. We ordered our ice cream to go. I also got some for Edward, as a peace offering. I dropped Alice and Rose at Rathburn before heading back to my apartment. I parked the car in the garage and headed up to the fourth floor. I unlocked the door and slipped inside. "Edward?"

"In the office, baby," he called.

I slipped off my coat and grabbed his ice cream. I had put mine in the freezer to eat later. I walked into the office and saw that the broken vase had been cleaned up and there was huge patch on the wall. "Aw, baby, you spackled."

"Yeah. I called Emmett and told him what happened and what I did to the wall. We went to the local hardware store to get the necessary supplies. We spent the better part of an hour trying to figure it out. I'm so not handy," he laughed.

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"I brought you a peace offering," I said as I held out the carton of cookie dough ice cream. Edward's eyes lit up and he reached for the carton greedily. He pulled off the lid and grabbed a spoonful. His eyes closed and he moaned.

"This is delicious, Bella. Thank you," he mumbled his mouth full of ice cream.

"I'm glad you like it, Edward. I'm going to shower. I worked up a sweat. I got some ice cream for myself but I'm going to save it. I'm not that hungry. Don't touch it, Cullen. Or I'll kung fu your ass," I giggled.

He swallowed, "Got it, beautiful. However, I don't think I'll be able to finish what you got me. This is very decadent."

I leaned down and kissed his forehead. He pouted and jutted his chin up, "Real one," he whined. I brushed my lips against his, tasting the ice cream on his mouth. I licked his lips and hummed.

"An 'Edward' Sundae. Delicious," I said as I scampered to the bathroom. I took a quick shower, blow drying my hair after I was done. When I walked out of the bathroom, Edward was on our bed, shirtless, reading his psychology book. His eyes were squinting. "Edward, when did you get your eyes checked last?"

"Um, when I was in like fifth grade? Why?"

"Because, you're squinting them when you read," I said as I crawled over him. "Have you been getting headaches after you've read a lot?"

"Actually, now that you mention it, yeah. Shit, I need glasses?" he grumbled.

"You like mine, Edward," I replied, rolling my eyes.

"Yeah. On you. You make glasses look sexy. I'll probably just end up looking like a geek," he whined.

"Would you like some cheese with your 'whine?'" I giggled.



## La Cantante

"Very punny, Bella," he retorted dryly. "I'll call to make an appointment to get my eyes checked."

"Good, Edward. Are we still going to the police station tomorrow?"

"Yeah. After University Singers. I called Detective Lutz and forwarded him the email," Edward said as he gently cupped my chin. "We're going to get him. He won't hurt you anymore. I won't let that happen."

"I know, Edward. I'm just still so scared that he can..." I trailed off.

"He won't. I'll kill him myself if he does anything to you," Edward growled, his eyes flashing with anger. He turned his gaze to me, softening it. "I love you so much, Bella. I don't know what I would do without you."

"I love you, too, Edward. Hopefully, nothing will happen to me or to you. However, I'm exhausted and we have an early class tomorrow. Ready for sleep?" I asked.

"Yeah," Edward replied with a smile. He turned down the bed and we both crawled under the covers. I lay down against his chest, pressing a kiss to his heart. "I love you, baby. I hope you get a good nights' rest."

"I love you very much, Edward. However, I doubt I will get good sleep. The nightmares are guaranteed for a comeback," I mumbled dejectedly.

"I'll sing them away," he said against my hair, putting his strong arms around me. I yawned and my eyes drifted shut. Edward was humming my lullaby, running his fingers through my hair. Before I knew it, sleep had consumed me.

**A/N: I know I breezed over the self defense part. I took a self defense class when I was in high school, 14 years ago and I really don't remember much. Anyhow, Jacob is making an untriumphant return but Bella's been warned by Emily. Leave some love...**

La Cantante

**Up next, meeting with the detectives and 'Snowmaggedon' (feeling inspired by my current predicament...)**

# Snowmaggdon

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*So, the inspiration for this chapter is coming from real life. I'm currently snowbound in home for the next two days because of one the worst blizzards to hit the Chicago-land area since 1967.*

## Chapter 57: Snowmaggdon

### EPOV

Bella's nightmares returned with a vengeance the next few nights. She would wake up screaming, clawing at my chest, drenched in sweat. I held her tight against me and I tried to sing them away but it wouldn't work. The nightmares were the worst the night she received the email from Emily. After three nights of the nightmares, Bella made an appointment to go to the counseling center. She met with the same counselor that she worked with before we left for Christmas break. He told her to journal her thoughts and it should help. He also to rely on her support system here at school. That system included me and Emmett, as well as everyone else in our little group.

We also met with the detectives to inform them the change in the situation. They told us that they would increase patrols and have Jacob's picture in each squad car so the officers could know who to look for. They also worked in conjunction with the campus police. I had spoken with Alistair and informed him of what Jacob was planning and he promised he'd post an alert notice in all the common areas stating not let Jacob into the apartment complex.

I was heading down to the workout area in the basement of the apartment when Bella called out to me. She was wearing her own workout clothes. "Edward,

## La Cantante

can you work with me on some of the self defense things I learned on Tuesday?"

"Sure, baby. Just don't break anything," I said with a crooked smirk. "There's some mats in the basement and actually in high school we had a self defense unit in gym when I was a senior. I could teach you some things, too."

She beamed and ran off to get her shoes. She had removed her jewelry, including her engagement ring. I frowned when I saw it absent from her hand. "What's wrong, Edward?"

"You took off your ring," I pouted.

"I took it off when I went to the seminar. I don't want to knock it against something and cause the center stone to fall out. Besides, if I connect with your jaw or something with my mean left hook, I'd take a chunk out of you," she reasoned. "I like you unscarred. You're too handsome for scars."

I rolled my eyes and I picked up my keys. Bella went into the fridge and got two bottles of water and bottle of Gatorade for me. We headed to the basement and Bella found the mats. She sunk down and began stretching out her body. I watched her with my mouth hanging open. She had spread her legs and she was leaning forward, bending herself half. She then reached with her opposite hand and grabbed her right foot, twisting her body. She repeated the motion to the left foot. "Edward, you're drooling."

"What?"

"You're drooling. They're stretches. Not sexual poses. Get your mind out of the gutter," she giggled.

"I know they're stretches and not sexual poses, but they are planting the seeds for things I want to do to you," I said as I sat down on the mat, facing her.

"How are you so bendy?"

## La Cantante

"I've always been flexible. Just clumsy," she giggled. "Aren't you going to stretch out?"

"And have you laugh at me? Uh, no," I snorted.

"Come on, Edward. You could pull something and I don't want to have to massage a pulled groin muscle," she said as she punched my thigh.

"You can massage something a little higher than the groin," I suggested with a waggle of my brows.

"I do that normally, you perv," she teased. "Spread your legs, Cullen. I'll help you. Like when you worked with Rose."

"Grrrr," I growled. "Fine." I unfolded my long legs and spread them like Bella had instructed. She hopped up and stood behind me, putting her hands on my shoulders. I hunched my back and leaned forward.

"Keep your back straight," she said as she snaked a hand around my abdomen and pressed with her other hand in between my shoulder blades, straightening me. She gently pushed down with her hand between my shoulders. "Exhale, Edward." I slowly released a breath and she pushed me further forward. I felt tightness in the backs of my legs. However, she had pushed me further than I had ever gone before. She helped me with a few more stretches as she did some more as well. After we were stretched out, Bella stood up and offered a hand to me. I gladly took it and heaved my body off the mats.

"Okay, let's start with what learned," I said. She explained the positions that she had been taught, demonstrating on me. After her explanation, we began a few 'attacks.' Each attack I did to her, she managed to release herself from. However, it felt weird attacking my fiancée. I mumbled that, but Bella insisted that we continue. With each progressive attack I did to her, I increased the strength so Bella could feel the difference. She still managed to use her techniques and get out of the holds I placed on her. There was one time where I wrapped my arms around her and she became dead weight and she stomped on my foot, hard. I yelped and she grabbed my wrist, twisting it away from my

## La Cantante

body, causing me to fall on my knees. I moaned and she immediately released my hand.

"Edward, I'm so sorry. Are you okay?" she asked. I nodded and gripped my wrist.

"You're stronger than you look, Bella. That really hurt," I said. "However, that was really good. If you did that to an attacker, you would easily get away."

She looked at me sheepishly and got the water that was by the edge of the mats. She tossed me a bottle. I opened it and downed the entire bottle in one large sip. She drank her water daintily. She had her back to me and I decided to blitz attack her. She had put her water down and she was playing with her hair. I put my arms around her waist and she tensed up. Again she became dead weight, elbowing me in the ribs. Hard. She turned in my arms and forcefully shoved me away. She then hooked a foot around my legs and pulled my legs out from underneath me, causing me to land on my back. I felt the air whoosh out of my lungs and I groaned. "Excellent job, Bella," I wheezed.

Her eyes widened and she sank to her knees, pepper kisses on my face. "I'm sorry, Edward. Are you alright? Did I hurt you?"

"Just knocked the wind out of me," I said as I leaned on my elbows. "Where did you learn that?"

"Police chief's daughter. He taught me a few things," she said with a sardonic grin. "I could always bring him down, but he's about six inches shorter than you and not as muscle-y. I would have never thought I could get you."

"Well, you did. Now, all this wrestling as got me all riled up. I want to take my fiancée upstairs and make, how did you put it? Oh, right, 'wild monkey sex' with you," I said as I got up. I stood up and threw Bella over my shoulder. She squealed and wiggled on my shoulder. I swatted her ass as we walked to the elevators. She then bit my ass. I yelped and put her down. She quirked a brow and grinned wickedly. When the elevator arrived, she got in and closed the doors. I narrowed my eyes and darted up the stairs to our floor. I was sprinting

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down the hallway when I saw her giggling as she ran down the hall to our apartment.

I trapped Bella at our door and unlocked it. I pushed us into the apartment. Bella's eyes were black and she had a smirk on her face. I pushed Bella against the door as we shut it. I picked her up and her legs wrapped around my waist. Her hands moved to my hair and she giggled.

"What are you sniggering about, Bella?" I said as I kissed along her neck.

"You're all sweaty, Edward," she said as she pulled me closer to her body.

"Having my beautiful fiancée kick my ass works up a bit of sweat," I mumbled against her neck. "So are you." I licked her neck and pulled her earlobe between my teeth.

She moaned and tightened her hold on me with her legs. I moved us from the door and carried her to the couch in the living room. I sat down on the couch and Bella lifted my shirt from my body, tossing it on the floor. She looked at me, "You are perfect, Edward."

I blushed and I gently swept her hair way from her face. "So are you, beautiful."

She leaned down, cupping my face in her hands, kissing both my cheeks, my nose and finally my lips. They were sweet angel kisses. She dragged her nose across my jaw and she inhaled deeply. She hummed against my neck. "You smell so good," she whispered.

I scrunched my nose. "Baby, I'm a sweaty mess. How can I smell good?"

"You smell like your body wash, with a touch of cologne and like you," she said as she nibbled on my ear. "I wouldn't have you any other way." I reached for the hem of her red t-shirt and pulled it up. I tossed it onto the floor next to my shirt. She was wearing a sports bra. She quirked a brow and eased herself out of it, putting it with our shirts. I palmed her breasts and pulled one of her

## La Cantante

nipples into my mouth. She moaned and arched her back. "Oh, Edward. I love the way you make me feel."

I gently bit down on her nipple and wrapped my other arm around her waist, holding her tightly against my chest. I moaned as she ground her hips against my cock. She abruptly got up and pulled down her yoga pants and underwear. She stood in front of me, wonderfully naked. She looked at me, tapping her foot. "In order to have wild monkey sex, you need to be naked, too, Edward."

I chuckled and pulled down my basketball shorts and boxer briefs. She pushed me back onto the couch and straddled my waist. She grabbed my cock and lined it up with her entrance and slammed down on to me, impaling herself with my rock hard member. We both moaned at the sensation. Bella moved her body up and down on my dick. She grabbed my hair and forced my head back, angling it so she could attack my neck. She nibbled and sucked on my neck and my fingers dug into her hips. She pulled away and she got up off my lap. "Bella?"

"Shhh, Edward," she said as she sat down, her back to me. She slipped my cock into tight pussy and leaned against me.

*This is new. Little Edward likes very much.*

I reached my hands and squeezed her breasts. She reached her hands and she massaged the back of my head as she arched her back. She swiveled her hips. I groaned at the new sensation that I was feeling. "Fuck, Bella. This feels so good." I reached down and began pinching her clit with my fingers. She began bouncing on my cock, rocking her body. I moved my hips with hers, rubbing her clit.

"Oh, Edward. I'm close. Don't stop," she moaned. She moved her body faster and I rolled her clit with one hand and squeezed her nipple with another. I attached my lips to her neck. She turned her head and captured my mouth with hers and I could feel her body begin to quake.



## La Cantante

"Let go, beautiful. I want to feel you come," I murmured against her soft lips. She moaned and her hand rested on top of mine that was on clit. We worked her body together and Bella's muscles clenched around my cock. She pulled away and screamed, arching her body. My dick twitched and I spilled into her, biting against her shoulder blade to stifle my own screams. We slowly regulated our breathing. "Holy shit. That was fucking intense," I whispered.

"Tell me about it. Rose suggested it," she giggled. "She read about this position in Cosmo."

"Remind me to thank Rose. I need to shower, baby. Join me?" I asked as I gently patted her thighs. She got up and I pulled out of her. She held out a hand and led me to our bathroom. We took a shower, kissing and caressing each other. We both walked out of the shower and decided to take a nap. We slid into the sheets and fell asleep quickly, exhausted from our physical exertions from today.

xx LC xx

After an extremely short weekend, Bella and I went to classes like usual. However, the campus was all abuzz with a coming blizzard heading our direction. Emerson *never* canceled classes. Ever. The weather people were predicting that we were to get about 20 to 30 inches of snow with high winds. It was slated to start late in the day on Tuesday and continue all day on Wednesday. As a precaution, Emerson canceled classes on Wednesday and would send out an email about classes on Thursday. On Tuesday, we invited everyone over to our apartment for a 'snowed-in' party. Bella's self defense seminar was canceled due to the weather and we figured it would be a lot of fun. We also invited Angela and her boyfriend, Ben for the party. I went to the grocery store with Emmett and we picked up food and alcohol. When we returned, Bella began preparing the food. She made a huge spread of dips, finger foods and appetizers. I placed the alcohol in a bin on our balcony where we left the non-alcoholic beverages in the fridge. Bella also made several batches of her famous brownies. I kept sticking my finger into the batter and Bella smacked me on the ass telling me that if I did it again, she'd withhold sex from me for a month. I gawked and my jaw was scraping the ground. She

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raised a brow and crossed her arms over her chest.

*She means business. I can't go a month without sex from my beautiful girl.*

I slumped my shoulders and flopped down onto the leather couch and idly flipped the channels. I turned it to one of the local channels and one of the weather guys was having a weather orgasm. He was talking about low pressure systems and the impending storm. He almost looked like he had his 'come' face on as he spoke. I chuckled and flipped the channel to Sports Center. I heard the intercom buzz. Bella answered it. "Hello?"

"It's Rose and Alice. Let us in! It's snowing like a sonofabitch!" Rose grumbled.

Bella pressed the button and opened the door partially. She went back to putting the brownies into the oven. I heard Rose and Alice come into the apartment, removing their coats. I hopped up and grabbed them. I put them on the bed in the office. "Hey. Do you all want something drink?" I offered like a gracious host.

"What do you have?" Rose asked as she blew into her hands.

"Leaded or unleaded?" I smirked.

"Leaded. If we don't have class tomorrow, I'm going to get lit," she giggled.

"Me, too, Edward," Alice said.

"We have some beer, stuff for mixed drinks and some foofy girly things. Kahlua or some shit like that," I said.

"Oh, I'll have a Kahlua drink," Alice said, bouncing on her toes. I looked at Rose and she indicated she'd have the same.

"Bella, do you want anything?" I asked as I poked my head into the kitchen.

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"The Kahlua drink sounds pretty good, baby," she said with a smile. I nodded and darted out to the balcony. I grabbed the drinks and a beer for myself. I handed the drinks to Rose and Alice, who had settled themselves on the couch. I went into the kitchen, wrapping my arms around Bella's waist, kissing her neck.

"I love you, beautiful," I said into her soft skin.

"I love you, too, Edward," she said as she laced her fingers with mine.

"Here's your drink," I said as I reached to the counter where I had laid her beverage.

She took it and sipped it. She moaned and rested her head against my shoulder, "This is really good."

I chuckled and I heard the intercom buzz again. I squeezed Bella before I went to see who it was. "Hello?"

"Eduardo! It's colder than a witch's tit!" Emmett boomed.

"Jack ass," I grumbled. I buzzed them in and waited by the door. Bella had lit a few candles around the apartment and it bathed the place in a homey glow and made it smell like a spa. Jasper, Emmett, Angela and Ben came in, covered in snow. "Is it coming down hard?"

"Yeah," Ben answered. He removed his hat and shook his head. "We've already gotten about three inches."

"Looks like everyone is staying here tonight," I said with a smile. "It's not like we don't have the room. Let me just run to our storage locker to get some air mattresses." I picked up my keys and darted down the hall. I unlocked the storage room and picked up the air mattresses that we had used when we first moved in. I walked back into the apartment and everyone had settled on the couches. Bella had gotten our newest arrivals some drinks. I put the air mattresses in the hallway of the apartment and sauntered over to the fireplace. I

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turned on the gas and lit it up. As I lit the fireplace, the lights flickered.

"Oh, the power's going to go," Emmett laughed.

"I hate the dark," Angela mumbled, cuddling against Ben.

"I'll protect you, baby," Ben said as he kissed her temple.

Bella reached for the flame thrower that I held in my hand. I gave it to her and she darted to the bathroom. She lit a few candles in there, as well as a few in the office and our bedroom. Bella came back and sat down on the floor next to me. Bella hadn't really talked to Angela since we abruptly moved her out. Angela was eyeing Bella warily. "Do you have something to tell me, Ms. Swan?"

"What are you talking about?" Bella replied, arching a brow.

"What is that on your left hand?" Angela said as she crossed her arms over her chest.

Bella looked down at her engagement ring and smiled. "Edward and I got engaged over the break. I'm sorry that I haven't told you," Bella said quietly.

Angela squealed and hopped out Ben's arms and hugged my fiancée. "I'm so happy for you! Let me see this rock."

Bella held out her hand and gave me a warm smile. "He did good, didn't he," she giggled.

"Um, better than good. This is absolutely gorgeous. Ben, when you pop the question, take Edward with you to pick out the ring. He's got fucking awesome taste," Angela said.

"Sure, baby," Ben retorted as he rolled his eyes. Angela shot daggers at him and stuck her tongue out at him.

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"Have you set a date, yet?" Angela asked as she sat down near Bella and me.

"August 13th. We're getting married at Edward's parents' house," Bella said.

"Have you met with a minister or a priest to perform the ceremony?" Angela asked.

"No, why?" I asked.

"My dad is a pastor and I'm certain he'd love to marry you two. I told him about your relationship over the break and he and my mom just swooned at your story," Angela replied.

"That would be fantastic!" Bella squealed as she wrapped her arms around Angela's neck. I also moved to hug Angela, kissing her on the cheek.

"Here, let me call him," Angela said as she hopped up to get her cell phone. She quickly dialed her phone and waited for her dad to pick up. "Hello? Tommy, can you get dad for me? My brother." Angela waited a few moments before her face lit up. "Daddy? Do you remember the couple I told you about over Christmas?"

We heard a muffled reply and a laugh. "Well, he proposed over break. They were wondering if you would perform the ceremony?" Angela asked. Another muffled noise came over the tiny speaker and Angela's face broke into a huge grin. "August 13th. I'll tell them. Love you, Daddy. Have fun shoveling tomorrow." She clicked off the phone and nodded. "He'd be honored. Let me give you his number and you can call him when you want to set up a meeting."

I handed Angela my phone and she programmed his number in there.

"Hey, Ang?" Bella asked.

"What's up, Bella?" she replied.

"Would you stand up for our wedding?" Bella asked.

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"I'd be more than happy to," Angela said with a warm smile. She hugged Bella and then hugged me. She skipped back to her perch next to Ben.

"Ben?" I asked, raising my brows.

"You got it, Edward. Besides, I need to catch a garter belt or something, right?" he laughed.

"Damn right you do, Cheney," Angela snickered. "I'm going to kick anyone's ass that comes between me and that bouquet."

We all laughed and the lights abruptly went off. Angela squealed and she buried her face into Ben's chest. The living room was lit in a warm, flickering glow from the fireplace and candles. I wrapped my arms around Bella and pulled her between my legs. She leaned against my chest and traced circles on my hands.

"Let's play a game!" Alice chimed from Jasper's lap. We all groaned. "What? Admit, truth or dare was fun."

"No, it wasn't. You didn't have to make out with Emmett," I grimaced.

"Hey now. I'm not that bad of a kisser, am I?" Emmett barked.

"I really wouldn't know. I was too focused on the fact that I was kissing a guy to worry about your form and technique," I snorted.

"Well, Edward, you are a good kisser. I actually focused on your kissing technique. Perfect pucker," Emmett said smugly. "Very soft lips."

"I think I just threw up in my mouth a little bit, Em. Can you *please* not bring that up again?" I begged.

"What? You are a good kisser. Jasper lay one on him and see," Emmett said.

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Jasper got up and started walking toward me. I ducked my head behind Bella's back. "Save me from the evil male kissing twins," I whimpered.

She giggled and laced her fingers with mine. "Jas, get him drunk first. Then you can make out with my fiancé," she laughed.

I scoffed and withdrew my arms from her waist. I got up and stomped to the kitchen to grab some water. I narrowed my eyes at Bella and she stuck her tongue out at me. I got the water out of the fridge and sat down on the couch, away from my evil fiancée. She pouted and crossed her arms over her chest.

We didn't end up playing a game, just hanging out and talking about school, our wedding, the situation with Jacob and what we did over our Christmas break. We hadn't told our story to Angela, Jasper and Ben of our engagement. They all swooned when we did. Angela gave Ben a pointed glare and he shrank back.

*Apparently Angela is ready to get married.*

Around midnight, people started yawning. Emmett and I began filling the air mattresses with the hand pump. Bella got some extra blankets and sheets from the linen closet and laid them onto the couch. Emmett and Rosalie were staying in the office. Alice and Jasper decided to sleep on the couch and Angela and Ben claimed the air mattress. We said our goodnights and all settled into bed.

xx LC xx

We ended up on having classes canceled on Thursday and house guests for the next few days. The power had come back on sometime during the night, which was good, since it was got very cold in the apartment. Bella had gone to sleep wearing long yoga pants, a long-sleeved t-shirt and a hoodie. She was still shivering when we crawled in between our covers. I held her tight all night, trying to keep her warm.

On Thursday, we ended up frolicking in the snow. We had an epic snowball fight and stayed out for a few hours. We headed inside when the girls

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complained about being cold. We all took turns showering. Bella offered clothes to the girls and I gave what I could to the guys. Except Emmett, since he's fucking huge. I did find him a hoodie that barely covered his massive form, but he shrugged it off saying he'd be fine.

Everyone decided to head back to the dorms on Thursday evening. The university had said that classes were canceled for Friday, but the professor's office hours were going to be held if students needed to see them. I had scheduled an eye appointment for Friday afternoon. Bella went with me as she told me that they would dilate my eyes and it would make driving difficult.

We got to the doctor's office early enough and I filled out the necessary paperwork. They called me back. I grabbed Bella's hand and she looked at me like I was crazy. "You're the expert at the whole eye thing. I need you," I explained. She shrugged and got up with me.

The nurse asked me a few questions and then did a preliminary eye screening. She then put some drops into my eyes. They stung. She told us that we would have to wait for about 20 minutes as the drops worked in my eyes. We went out into the waiting area. I leaned my head against Bella's shoulder. She was reading our music literature book, highlighting important passages as she did. A half hour later, the same nurse came out and led me to a different room. A young male doctor came in and introduced himself as Dr. Seeman. He looked into my eyes and determined that they looked fine. He then did a vision screening and frowned.

"Have you been having headaches recently?" he asked.

"Only when I read a lot or if I am on the road for a good chunk of time," I explained.

"Well, you definitely need some corrective lenses. It's a mild prescription, but they're necessary," Dr. Seeman explained.

"Can I get contacts?" I asked.



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"Let's get you fitted with glasses first. Come back in about three months and then we can discuss the possibility of contacts. Here's your prescription," he said as he handed me a card. I looked at it but couldn't see much because of the dilation to my eyes. I stuck the card into my wallet and shook his hand. Before we left, I made an appointment for three months so I could get contacts. Bella took out her keys and drove me a local store where they had glasses that were ready in about an hour. We wandered around the store, trying on different glasses. We finally settled on a pair that were good. They were brown, metal frames that were rectangular. The bottom didn't have a frame, but was attached with a small clear wire. Bella and I went to get some dinner as we waited for my glasses to be completed. As I settled the bill, my phone rang and it was the store calling to tell me that my glasses were ready for pick up.

We walked to the rear of the store and I gave the salesperson my receipt. She scurried and got my glasses. She handed them to me and slipped them on my face. I was in shock at how clear everything was.

*Was I really that blind? Shit!*

They made some subtle changes to the frames, adjusted them to fit over my ears comfortably. They also changed the nose pads so they wouldn't dig into my face. Bella looked at me as I got my glasses adjusted and her eyes were lust-filled. I paid for my glasses and slipped the case into my jacket pocket. I just kept looking around and was in awe of the crispness of the images I saw. Bella giggled. "What?"

"That's how I was when I first got glasses. I never realized how things were supposed to look. I always thought things were supposed to be fuzzy," she said, lacing her fingers through mine.

"It's weird though. I like being able to see and I never realized how bad my vision was. However, I go to scratch my eye and I'm blocked by a plastic lens," I snorted.

"You'll get used to it. Now, I have my sexy geek," she purred, ruffling my hair.

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"We're a pair. You the hot librarian and me the sexy geek," I said as I kissed her soft lips.

"Hmmm...I think I want to go home and make love to my sexy geek," she cooed.

"Yes and please!" I said as we got to the car. We drove home quickly and lived out our sexy geek fantasies.

**A/N: So, what do you think? Love? Hate? Indifference?**

**Up next will be a gig at Eclipse, some wedding shenanigans, minor drama.**

# The Gig

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 58: The Gig

### BPOV

I had to admit. Edward looked fucking hot in glasses. He grumbled that looked like a nerd, but I wholeheartedly disagreed. The glasses we chose made the angles of his face look much sharper and his features appear to be more chiseled. As much as he disliked them, he did keep them on, which was something that surprised me. When I first got glasses, I hated wearing them and would take them off and pretend I didn't wear them. My teachers would yell at me when I squinted and my dad would get all stern when I complained that I got a headache. I eventually got over it when I started wearing contacts and I didn't look like a nerd. However, my prescription was much more severe than Edward's. I had to get the polybicarbonate lenses so they wouldn't break the frame.

After our little snow vacation, classes resumed like normal. The teachers distributed updated assignment lists as the missing days had goofed up their syllabi. The girls and I had our self defense seminar on Tuesday and we worked on some different attacks and postures. Stephen was pleased with our improvement. We also didn't have our usual gig at Eclipse the past weekend. We hadn't had an opportunity to rehearse and the club was forced to close because of the snow. Kellan had called us and told us that we were to play this Friday. Edward agreed and we scheduled a rehearsal for Wednesday with Jasper and Emmett.

During the day on Wednesday, we went to our classes. Music Theory was

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interesting as Larry was absent. Victoria did a better job teaching than James did. However, you could tell that she was not comfortable in front of the class. She did appear to look at Edward a little too closely during class. Her eyes ran up and down him like he was something to eat. I poked him in the belly and gestured to Victoria. Edward looked at her and she quickly looked away, blushing.

"She's undressing you with her eyes, Edward. I don't like it," I muttered angrily.

"Someone's jealous," Edward laughed.

"You bet your ass I'm jealous. You're mine. Only I get to undress you, with my eyes and otherwise," I said folding my arms across my chest.

"You're right, baby. Just ignore her. I love only you," he said as he tucked a piece of hair behind my ear. I nodded and turned back to my notes. I shot daggers at Victoria for the rest of the class and made sure that I flashed the engagement ring, like a talisman.

After theory, we walked to Educational Psychology. Dr. Hafenrichter was still very upset with the missing days that we had because of the snow. He was flustered at having to cram more information into each class session. It showed when he delivered the notes. Edward was smart enough to bring a small digital recorder because Dr. Hafenrichter spoke like he was on crack. We went our separate ways after psychology. I was going to my biology class. We had a lab today. Alice was my partner and she hated the class with a passion. We were beginning our cat dissection and that was going to take a majority of the semester. Today, we were being introduced to our animals and we needed to observe any anomalies on the exterior of the cat. The professor had informed us that we needed to make up a lab because of the snow day, but he would accommodate our schedules for that. He said he'd be doing the 'make-up' lab on two days. We needed to come to the day that was more convenient for us. After consulting with Alice, we decided that we would make up the lab tomorrow. One of the times was conveniently after my sociology class. Alice, thankfully, didn't have many classes on Thursday so it worked out well. Alice still griped

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about the class, but there was nothing to be done.

We headed to University Singers after our lab. Alice spent ten minutes in the bathroom, scrubbing her hands clean and spraying herself with body spray. She needed to get the 'stench of dead cat' off her body. I kept complaining that we were going to be late for class. I eventually gave up and started walking back to Brandon. Alice was all pissy when she caught up to me. "Why did you leave me, Bella?"

"Because you were taking forever in the bathroom. I don't want to be late for class. I got an email from Eleazar saying that we were having sectionals, but he didn't say what. I want to get to University Singers early so I can meet with him, along with my other section leaders," I said with a huff. "Come on you evil, little sprite."

We walked into Brandon and got to our seats as Eleazar was starting warm ups. I glared at Alice and she gave me a sheepish grin. I plopped my books on my seat next to Edward who gave me a smile. We were just beginning physical warm ups. Eleazar had us massage each other's shoulders. Edward made a comment about how tight my shoulders were. I shrugged and continued massaging Rose's shoulders. Before we turned, Edward kissed my neck. I poked him in the side as I massaged his shoulders. He gave me his signature lopsided grin over his shoulder and winked his eye. Out of the corner of my vision, I saw Tanya make a gagging gesture to some girl that I didn't know. She then leaned in and started whispering into the girl's ear. Her eyes widened and she looked at Edward and me, with pity in her eyes.

*What is she saying? Stupid cow.*

After the warm ups, Eleazar informed us that we were having sectionals. We were going to work on the 'Lacrimosa' section of the *Requiem*. He gave us approximately twenty minutes to work on the section he wanted perfected. I took the sopranos to one of the small ensemble rooms and they settled in the seats there. Tanya and the other girl sat right in the front. They shared a look and smiled evilly. I ran through the part that Eleazar wanted us to work on. Tanya was purposefully singing off key and saying that it was me who was

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teaching her the wrong part. Alice glared at her and she shrugged. After our allotted rehearsal time, we headed back to the choir room. I closed my eyes and grabbed my music from the piano. Tanya was still standing in the room.

"He'll never stay with you," she sneered.

"Tanya, just get over it. He doesn't want you. He wants me," I said as I tried to push past her.

"Oh, no, bitch. You're not going anywhere until you get it through your head that Edward is mine. He may enjoy you now, but you'll never keep him satisfied," she snarled in my face. She grabbed my arm and squeezed.

"Get your grubby hands off me, you slut," I seethed.

"He's mine, bitch," Tanya growled. Her hand moved to my wrist and I quickly twisted my arm out of her grasp, grabbing her wrist and twisting it behind her back. Tanya yelped and struggled against my hold.

"Touch me again and you will be on your back, Skankya. Are we clear?" I whispered in her ear. She nodded and I released her, pushing her away. I heard Edward's voice in the hallway.

"Bella? Is everything alright?" he said as he came into the rehearsal room.

"No. This bitch will not let you go," I seethed. "She threatened me and grabbed my wrist."

Edward's eyes widened and he growled lowly. "Tanya, this is over. Get it through your head that I'm with Bella and will always be with Bella. For the rest of my life. If you touch her again, we will press charges."

"She retaliated," Tanya whined.

"No, I defended myself," I clarified. "I went easy on you. Next time, if you touch me, I won't be as gentle."

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Tanya scoffed and turned on her heel and returned to the choir room. Edward held open his arms and I fell into them. I cried into his chest as all the fears of losing him, all of the fears of having our lives being ripped apart poured out of my body. He held me tightly, running his fingers over my back. "It's okay, beautiful. I love you. Everything will be alright," he comforted. I calmed down and wiped my cheeks hastily with my hands. Edward cupped my chin and he lovingly caressed my cheeks with his thumbs. His beautiful green eyes gazed into mine and he leaned in to kiss me. "Ready?"

"No, but we have to. Eleazar will be worried," I replied. Edward laced his fingers with mine and he pushed up his glasses on his face. We darted down the stairs and headed back into the choir room and took our seats. Eleazar gave us a concerned look but continued with the rehearsal. The rest of rehearsal was a blur. I barely sung or participated. When rehearsal was done, Eleazar asked me to stay behind. Edward stayed with me.

"Is everything alright, Bella?" Eleazar asked, his face showing concern.

"Not really, Eleazar. One of the other sopranos got in my face during sectionals and it got ugly," I mumbled.

"Let me guess, Tanya?" Eleazar questioned.

I nodded and a few tears ran down my cheeks. Edward squeezed my hand and gave me a reassuring smile. "She's having difficulties getting over her break up with Edward and she's taking it out on me," I replied. "She put her hands on me and threatened me. I defended myself from her unprovoked attack."

"What did she do?" Eleazar asked angrily.

"She grabbed my arm and then squeezed my wrist that I had injured over break," I explained. "It's nothing serious, but no one has any right to touch me without my permission."

"I'll speak with Tanya and if she pulls another stunt like this, she's out. I invited her because she's grown as a singer and she earned a spot in University

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Singers. However, it was due to Senna having to deal with a family emergency, but she still earned the spot," Eleazar said thoughtfully. Eleazar gave me a hug and gently rubbed my shoulders. I tried to hold back the tears that threatened to pour over my cheeks. I pulled away and gave him a tight smile. Eleazar grabbed his folder and left the room after patting my shoulder.

Edward snaked his arms around my waist and pulled me to his chest. I leaned against him and took a few deep breaths. I willed myself to calm down. After a few moments, I had gathered myself and moved away from Edward's comforting embrace. I got our bags and coats. Edward held out my coat for me and slipped it over my shoulders. Before we left, Edward grabbed my hand. I turned around and looked at him. He took my face in between his large hands, "Bella, I love you. Only you. You are perfect, loving, beautiful, talented, and intelligent and everything I could ask for in a woman, my equal, my wife. Tanya is nothing. She will continue to be nothing. She will never be you," Edward said, his eyes shining. "Besides, I prefer brunettes."

I snorted and rolled my eyes. "Thank you, Edward, for defending my honor from the evil Skankya. I love you, handsome," I said as I kissed his nose. I then pushed his glasses up his nose and he groaned. I giggled at his reaction. "Why are you groaning?"

"I miss my shades. Especially on sunny days like this," he grumbled.

"You can still wear them. You just won't be able to see," I explained as I linked my hand with his. "Come on, we need to get the stuff from the storage locker for our rehearsal. Emmett gave me his keys to the truck. He has some athletic training seminar this afternoon and can't pick up the equipment."

"Is his car at Patterson?" Edward asked.

"Yeah," I responded.

"I'll drive you there and you can follow me to the apartment," Edward said as we got to his Volvo. I got into the passenger seat and Edward slid into the driver's seat. He drove us to Patterson and pulled in front of Emmett's truck. I



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grabbed the keys that he gave me in passing this morning as I walked to biology. I also picked up my wallet and darted to the truck. I moved the seat forward and followed Edward to the apartment. He parked on the street before he got into the passenger side of Emmett's truck. "Let's get the stuff. Do you have the keys for the storage locker?"

"They're on the key ring," I said as I pulled the car away from the curb. I hated driving Emmett's truck. It was always filled with crap and garbage. I loved my brother, very much. However, he was a pig. I scrunched my nose as we drove to the storage facility.

"What's with the face, beautiful?" Edward laughed.

"Emmett is a slob," I grumbled.

"I know. I lived with him for four months. His socks always ended up in my bed and his briefs were always strewn around the room. It was gross," Edward said with a grimace.

"At home in Seattle, there was always an odor emanating from his room. One day, Charlie and I ventured in there and discovered what the odor was. It was a moldy pizza that had been shoved under his bed. It looked like it had been in there for months," I said as I held back gags.

"That's fucking disgusting," Edward blanched. He took off his glasses and scrubbed his face. "I need to shower after hearing that story."

"Sorry, baby. You got the neater Swan," I giggled.

"Bella, you're anal. Now, I know why," Edward said with a snort. He put his glasses back on nose and quirked a brow over the frames.

"When you live with two sloppy guys, you have to be. If I didn't clean up after them, we'd be living in a house filled with moldy pizzas. No thank you," I responded.

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"That's something I'll never understand," Edward pondered.

"What, handsome?"

"Why men are always classified as being slobs. I'm not sloppy," he retorted.

"No, Edward, you're not. However, you're the exception and I'm eternally grateful. If I find a moldy pizza under our bed, I'll bludgeon you with it," I giggled.

"If I leave a pizza under the bed, I'll gladly except the bludgeoning," he laughed. "That's just foul."

I pulled into the storage facility and punched in the access code that Emmett gave me into the entrance. The gate opened up and I slowly drove the truck to our locker. I pulled up to the storage locker and hopped out of the truck after I killed the engine. I unlocked the huge lock on the door and pushed the door up. Edward darted inside and began lugging the equipment out of the locker and putting it in the bed of the truck. I went to grab a few things, but Edward gave me a pointed look. "Bella, this stuff is too heavy for you to carry."

"Edward, I'm not a complete weakling. I managed to bring you down," I teased.

"Yeah, well, I would feel more comfortable if you just let me handle loading the truck. I don't want you to reinjure your wrist or your shoulder," Edward said.

"Edward Anthony Masen Cullen, don't be such a guy," I said as I marched past him and picked up the mixer. I hopped up in the bed of the truck and began arranging the items that Edward had already put in there, pushing the mixer close to the cab. Edward narrowed his eyes and stuck out his tongue at me. "Don't stick out your tongue at me unless you plan on using it."

Edward stopped dead in his tracks and turned to face me. "I can't believe you just said that."

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"Believe it, buddy," I retorted as I continued arranging the items in the truck. "Come on! It's cold and we need to drop off the stuff at Eclipse."

He grumbled and finished putting the stuff into the bed of the truck. After everything was placed into the truck, I pulled the tarp over the top of it. Edward locked the storage locker and passed me the keys. I went to hop out of the truck, when Edward grabbed my legs and slung me over his shoulder. "Put me down, Caveward!"

"What did you just call me?" he laughed as he smacked my ass.

"Caveward! Whenever you toss me over your shoulder, you remind me of a caveman. Hence, 'Caveward,'" I explained as I wiggled on his shoulder.

He put me down and trapped me against the cab of the truck. "You. Bella. Mine," he grunted as he dragged his nose across my jaw. He leaned and brushed his lips across my neck. "Mine. Forever." He moved his mouth to my lips and he plunged his tongue into my open lips. I moaned and I wrapped my arms around his waist.

"Yours, baby. Bella cold," I giggled.

"Edward, too," he snorted. "Okay, enough of this. I'm freezing my balls off. Let's go to Eclipse and get set up."

I nodded and got into the truck. As soon as Edward got in, I pulled out of the storage facility. We drove to Eclipse and were greeted by Kellan.

"Hey guys! How are things?" he asked cheerily.

"Good. How about you?" Edward asked politely.

"Awesome. I have some news for you," Kellan said excitedly.

"What's that?" I asked warily.

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"I have a friend of mine who works for a record company. I invited him to come and listen to your band play on Saturday," Kellan responded.

"Really?" Edward asked.

"Yep. I even gave him a few links to some videos that were taken of your last shows that were posted on YouTube. He seemed impressed," Kellan said.

Edward and I shared a look. "This is a good thing. You guys are one of the best bands I've ever seen. Trust me?" Kellan pleaded. Edward nodded and held out his hand. Kellan shook it and helped him unload our equipment. I went inside and began setting up the sound equipment as the guys worked on bringing in the drums and other paraphernalia.

"Are you sure it's okay for us to leave the stuff here until Friday?" Edward asked.

"Yeah. We're not having another band here for awhile since you've signed to work with us," Kellan explained.

"Are you also okay with us rehearsing here tonight?" I asked.

"No big deal. We're closed today," Kellan said. "However, we're starting a new schedule next week. We'll be open every day but Mondays. If you want to rehearse here in this space, you'll have to do it on Mondays or during the days when we're open."

"Thanks, Kellan," Edward said. "Are we good with the set up?"

"I think so," I said. "Emmett will have to set up his drums. I don't know how he likes them."

"Alright, let's head back to campus and deliver his truck and get some grub. All this moving made me hungry," Edward said as he rubbed his belly.

"You're turning into Emmett with the food," I joked.

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"Am not! Emmett is a walking vacuum cleaner. I'm only a dust buster," Edward said proudly.

"Oh, good lord. Come on dust buster, let's boogie," I said as I walked to the entrance of Eclipse. Edward put on his jacket and followed me. We drove back to the apartment to pick up Edward's car and he followed me to Patterson. I parked Emmett's car and called him. He didn't pick up so I called Jasper. He was in the room and he darted down the stairs. I handed him Emmett's keys saying we would see him at Eclipse after seven. Jasper gave me a hug and I darted into Edward's car. We drove back to the apartment and ate late lunch/early dinner. I sat down on the couch and worked on some homework. Edward went into the office and worked on the set list that he wanted to perform on Saturday.

We headed to Eclipse and had our rehearsal. It went well. After two and half hours, we had our set list figured out and felt comfortable with the pieces we chose. Emmett wanted to go to McFinnigans after our rehearsal but we needed to remind him that we had an early class the next morning. He grumbled and we went our separate ways. However, as it turned out, Edward was horny and wanted to get some.

*Who am I to deny my fiancé?*

xx LC xx

On Thursday, we had classes like usual. Edward and I spent some time in my practice room after Aural Harmony to work on the intervals that he was struggling with. He was so adorable when he was concentrating on the sounds. His brows furrowed, he bit down on his bottom lip and he ran his hand through his unruly hair. I wanted to take him in my practice room but figured that wouldn't be too appropriate.

*Though we did fuck on the Steinway on stage.*

Our classes went by slowly during the day. We went home after I had my make-up lab for biology and ate a quick dinner. We had to go back to campus

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for Express rehearsal. The first rehearsal was canceled because Felix was stuck in Vancouver for some strange reason. The second rehearsal was canceled because of 'Snowmageddon.' So, this was our first rehearsal for the semester. Edward and I walked onto the stage of Brandon. We both blushed at the last time we were here. Edward leaned down and growled in my ear, "I'm waiting for a repeat performance, baby." I whimpered and closed my eyes.

Felix waltzed onto the stage and welcomed everyone back with a flourish. He blathered on about his vacation and how he spent his time off. He then distributed some new music. He reached Edward and I and his eyes got as big as saucers. He started bouncing on his toes and squealing like Alice. We shared a frightened look. "Felix? Is everything alright?" Edward asked.

"Everything is fabulous. For *you*! Let me see your ring, Miss Bella," he gushed as he flamboyantly flapped his hands. I held out my left hand and he oohed and aahed over my engagement ring. "When did you propose, Edward?"

"New Year's Eve," he said as he wrapped his arms around my waist.

"Congratulations! This is a first in Express history. We've never had an engaged couple in the group. We may have to feature you two. Let me think of something and I'll present it to you guys next week," Felix said with a sly grin. "Yay!"

We learned the new piece of music and Felix worked us hard with the choreography. Before we left, he gave Edward and I a wink. "What do you think he's going to have us do?"

"Probably some kind of duet or something," Edward shrugged.

"I'm okay with singing, but if it's singing and dancing...Lord have mercy," I said as I fanned myself.

"Knowing Felix, he'll have us do some huge elaborate Fosse number, complete with bowler hats and canes," Edward snorted. He hunched his shoulders and started moving around like a 'Fosse-dancer.'

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"Edward, just stop," I said, putting my hand on his shoulder. "You're sexy, but not when you move like that."

"Don't hate on my mad skills, Bella," he said as he put on his coat. "Ready to go home?"

"Yes. I have a date with the bathtub," I sighed.

"Solo date?" Edward asked dejectedly.

"You can join me, if you want, handsome," I said as I kissed his cheek.

He did a fist pump and nearly dragged me out of the auditorium. He raced home and we quickly went upstairs to our apartment. I put my coat in the closet and toed off my shoes. Edward put his jacket on one of the kitchen chairs and he picked me up, bridal style, carrying me to the bathroom. "Edward, I can walk myself."

"I know, but you weren't moving fast enough," he said with a wicked grin. He put me down on the edge of the tub and turned on the water. He held his hand underneath the stream until it got a temperature that he liked. When it did, he put the stopper in the drain. He turned his gaze to me and he moved to lift my shirt. I held up my arms and he pulled my long sleeved t-shirt from my body. He took my hands and stood me up, reaching for the button of my corduroy jeans. He unbuttoned them and slowly unzipped my fly. He gently tugged the pants from my body. I stepped out of them and I was in just my light pink bra and lacy panties. "Fuck, you're beautiful."

I blushed and moved my hands to Edward's button down shirt. I quickly unbuttoned it and shoved it off his shoulders. I leaned forward and pressed a kiss above his heart, right on the swan. He took off his glasses and put them on the bathroom counter. As he did so, I reached for his belt buckle and unbuttoned his cargo khakis and eased them over his hips. I traced the outline of his tattoo on his hip and his skin pebbled. Edward's gaze darkened and he leaned down to kiss me. I eagerly accepted the kiss but all too soon, he pulled away. He put some bubbles into the water of the bath and he stepped out of his

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boxers. Edward looked at me and he ran his hands up and down the sides of my body. He reached behind me and released the clasp of my bra. He pulled me flush to his body and kissed me deeply. His fingers hooked the edges of my panties and he moved them down my legs. After Edward removed my panties, he turned off the water. I slid into the fragrant water and leaned against the edge of the tub. Edward got in behind me and pulled me against his chest.

I dipped my head under the water, wetting my hair and then leaned against Edward. His fingers ghosted over my body, purposefully avoiding the places where I wanted him to go the most. I could feel his smile against my shoulder as I whimpered at his sweet torture. "Edward," I moaned, reaching for his hands.

"What, baby?" he asked.

"Please," I begged.

Edward's hands moved up my body and they gently grasped my breasts.

*It's not what I wanted, but it's closer.*

He gently squeezed my breasts and flicked the nipples. I moaned and arched my back as his touch. Edward's lips reached my pulse point on my neck and he began kissing along the column of my neck. I could feel his cock become hard between us. I reached in between our bodies and I found what I was looking for and I began to slowly pump. Edward hissed and moved one of his hands to my clit. His long fingers circled the sensitive nub as his other hand toyed with my breast. I continued pumping his cock and could feel his hot breath against my skin. "Bella, I need you," he whispered.

I turned around and straddled his legs. The water sloshed a bit over the edge of the tub. Edward reached up and gently caressed my face as I slid onto his rock hard cock. "Oh, God, Edward. You feel so good," I moaned as I settled my body over his. He whimpered and wrapped his arms around my waist. Edward lifted his head and placed feather light kisses along my jaw and neck as I began riding him in the tub. With my hands, I weaved my fingers through his hair and



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crashed my lips against his, growling into his mouth. His fingers dug into my hips and he returned my forceful kiss with fervor. His tongue dipped into my mouth and danced with mine. I gently bit down on his lip and nibbled lightly. My hips were rocking and the combination of the water, Edward and our heavy make out session was causing my body to erupt in pleasure. "Baby, I'm close," I cried.

"Let go, Bella," he hissed. "I want to feel you. I love you, baby." Edward's fingers tightened along my hips and I moved faster, the coil in my belly getting closer to springing free. He moved his lips from my mouth and traced them along my neck, pulling my earlobe into his teeth. I swiveled my hips and tangled my fingers into his soft, silky hair. My breathing became more and more erratic as my muscles began to quiver. Edward grabbed my hair and angled my neck so he could suck my neck and with his forceful actions, my body exploded. I let out a feral scream as my muscles clenched around Edward. He grunted a few times and I felt him spill into me. After a few moments, I crawled off Edward's lap and sat facing him. Edward looked at me, his eyes dark, before he sunk below the water. I giggled as he stayed under the water for a few seconds. He came back up and his hair was hanging in my eyes. "Holy shit, baby," he whispered as he pushed his out of his face.

I smiled at him and handed him his shampoo and body wash. "You need to stay over there and I'll stay here or we'll get a repeat performance."

"And this is a bad thing because...?" Edward prompted as he took his shampoo.

"My knees can't take it," I said as I popped my knees out of the top of the water. They were red and would definitely be bruised tomorrow.

"I'm sorry, baby," he said as he leaned forward and pressed kisses on my knees. "I promise I'll be good. Let me wash your hair. Please?" he asked with my favorite smile.

*How could I deny him?*

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I rolled my eyes and gave him my strawberry shampoo. He put some into his hands and gently massaged it into my long hair. I sighed as his long fingers ran through my hair. "Okay, dunk," he said. I held my breath and slid under the water, running my fingers through my wet strands to get the shampoo out. I popped up and felt my hair to see if I was shampoo free.

"Your turn," I said as I turned around. I picked up Edward's shampoo and squirted some into my hands. I lathered up his hair and made a Mohawk of his shampoo-filled hair. I broke into hysterical laughter. He felt his head.

"Funny, Bella," he said dryly as he slipped beneath the water, effectively ruining my creation. He popped back up and ran his hands through his hair, mussing it up. It stuck up every which direction and he couldn't look more sexy. I leaned forward and chastely kissed his lips before getting out of the now cool water. I wrapped a towel around my body and handed one to Edward. I eased out of the tub and padded out to our bedroom. I put on a pair of simple white panties and one of Edward's t-shirts. He loved when I wore his clothes. So, I picked a shirt that his name scrawled on the back. It was his old high school track shirt. I slipped it over my head and inhaled deeply. I loved Edward's smell. A combination of fresh air, sunshine and sandalwood. Perfect. I walked to the office and grabbed my sociology book and a highlighter. I strolled back into the bedroom and settled under the covers to do some reading for my *favorite* class...not.

Edward walked into the bedroom, a pair of boxers on his body and he was putting on his glasses. He picked up the remote and turned on the television. He lay down and cuddled under the covers. He leaned his head on my shoulder and read the sociology book with me. "You know, that class is total bullshit. You probably don't even need to read. Just listen during the lectures and take good notes and you should be fine," Edward said.

I looked at him and quirked a brow. "Really? Edward? I would like to keep my 4.0 GPA, thank you very much," I said smugly.

He rolled his eyes and turned his attention to the television. I eventually got up and went into the bathroom. I removed my contacts and put on my own

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glasses. Edward was thumbing through the sociology book, glancing at what I had read and skimming the highlighted passages. I snatched the book away, narrowing my eyes at Edward. "I am not about to do ALL the work and have you cheat off me," I teased.

"I would never do such a thing," Edward said, holding his hands up in defense. I tossed the book on the floor and slid back into bed. I took off my glasses and put my head onto the pillow. Edward flipped off the television and turned off the lights and he lay to face me. "I love you, baby."

"I love you, too, Edward," I said as I caressed his cheek. His face was covered in a light coating of stubble. There was something about Edward when he had a couple-day old beard. He looked so sexy, almost dangerous. However, I knew it wasn't the case. I smiled and chuckled.

"What, Bella?"

"I'm just thinking about how sexy you are," I said as I shifted closer to him, running my fingers through his damp hair. "How lucky I am."

"I'm the lucky one, beautiful," he said as he leaned and kissed my lips. I wrapped my arms around Edward's neck and held him close. His arms snaked around my body and he eagerly returned my embrace. I yawned into Edward's shoulder and he snorted. He fell onto his back and I put my head on his chest. "Sleep well, my Bella. I love you."

"Love you more, handsome," I said as I kissed his heart. He scratched my back and I eventually drifted to sleep, happily encased in my love's arms.

xx LC xx

Edward and I woke up the next morning and headed to class. They went by quickly. Thankfully, Tanya was not at University Singers. I was ready for her stares and sneers, but grateful she wasn't there to give them to me. After University Singers, Alice and Rose kidnapped me and started treating me like their very own life-sized Barbie doll. While I was not happy about being made

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up and curled within an inch of my life, I was okay with the fact I had my own personal stylists to make me beautiful for our show. Alice even worked with the guys and fine tuned their looks. She left Edward alone because I told her not to. He looked perfect on stage. She focused her efforts on Emmett and Jasper.

When we got to the apartment, they pushed me into the shower and told me to wash every inch of my body and to scrub my hair.

*Jeez! Bossy much?*

I showered, shaved and washed my body. As I was in the shower, the fashion fairies had put my lingerie on the bathroom counter that I was supposed to wear. I picked up the black bra and panty set and scoffed. It was barely string and two scraps of fabric. I growled and pulled them on. I felt naked. I clasped the bra onto my body but liked that. It pushed the boobs up and gave me great cleavage. Also, the tops of my nipples were prominent over the demi-cups, under the sheer lace. Edward is going to love this one. I put my robe on from behind the bathroom door and I walked out into my bedroom. On the bed, my outfit was laid out. It was similar to the one that I wore to the first show I had with Breaking Midnight. It was a black, green and silver plaid skirt with pleats, black tights and a black sparkly tank top. I nodded my approval and walked out into the kitchen where Rose and Alice had set up their beauty station. As they worked on my hair, Edward came into the apartment.

"Lucy! I'm home," he said in a bad Cuban accent.

"In the kitchen, Ricky," I giggled.

*Gotta love I Love Lucy .*

Rose and Alice shared a look. However, they continued with their assault with curling implements to my hair.

"Hey guys," Edward said as he strolled into the kitchen. "What have you done to my kitchen?"

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"We're beautifying your fiancée for your show tonight, Edward," Alice said as she perfected a curl.

"She's already beautiful," Edward said thoughtfully.

"Awww, Edward, you say the sweetest things," Rose gushed. "Talk to her brother and get him to say sweet things. I love Emmett, but he's not a hearts and flowers type of guy."

"No, he's not. However, he's different when he's around you, Rose," I said. "He's more hearts and flowers with you than he's been with his other girlfriends."

"Oh."

"Edward?" Alice asked.

"Yes, Pixie?" he said as he hopped on the counter.

"Are you wearing your glasses when you perform tonight? If you do, it'll ruin my whole feel for your performance," she said sweetly.

"I had planned on it, but I guess taking them off for the show won't be a bad thing. It's funny, though. I never realized how bad my vision was until I got these," he said as he wiggled his frames on his face. "I won't wear them. They would probably fall off my face because of all the sweating I do up there."

"Great! Your clothes are hanging in your closet," Alice said.

"Alice, I thought you would leave Edward alone," I chided.

"For the most part, I did. I'm only *enhancing* his performance look. Trust me," she said as she smiled at both Edward and I. Edward raised his brows and I shrugged.

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He hopped off the counter and went into the bedroom. "Mary Alice Brandon Cullen! There is NO WAY IN HELL I'm wearing SKINNY JEANS!" he yelled. "I'm sorry, but I have to draw a line somewhere. I'll wear the shirt that you have picked out, but no skinny jeans. I'm not gay and I don't want girls ogling my junk."

"Edward, you'll look hot," Alice whined.

"No, I won't. I'll look stupid. We'll leave the skinny jeans for Bella. She can pull them off. Not me. Not Jasper. And certainly NOT Emmett," Edward fumed.

"Alice, please tell me that you didn't put Emmett into skinny jeans?" Rose asked.

"Um, well?" she floundered.

Edward pulled out his phone and called Emmett. I heard him barking into the phone and all I could do was laugh. It was quite humorous to see him all worked up over skinny jeans. Alice finished doing my hair in silence and she looked very sheepish.

"So, Bella, have you called Angela's father yet?" Rose asked, breaking the silence.

"Yeah. Edward and I called him on Monday. We're meeting with him over next weekend. Also, at some point, I'd like to go out with you and Angela to find your bridesmaid dresses," I said.

"You have to wait until you get your dress. We want to coordinate," Alice said quietly. "We're going to go shopping for your dress over President's Day weekend, so we can look then."

"Sounds good."

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Edward walked back into the kitchen, holding his glasses in one hand and pinching the bridge of nose with the other. "Alice, you're fired as our 'stylist.'"

"What? No! Edward, I promise I'll do better next time," she cried.

"Fine. No skinny jeans," he fumed. He stomped off and went to get dressed.

Alice and Rose worked on my makeup and like usual, they managed to make me look like a rock star. My face was glowing with the light amount of foundation that put on. I had a bit of pink blush on my cheeks. My eyes were smoky with a gun metal silver shade. My lips were covered in a dark pink lipstick and Alice pressed some gloss into my hand for right before I went on stage. Before I went to go get changed, Alice instructed me to flip my head and she attacked me with hairspray. She tapped my shoulder and I whipped my hair back. She twisted a few strands so my face would not be hidden and then she pushed me toward my bedroom.

Edward had just finished getting ready and he was wearing a pair of dark, distressed jeans with his black Doc Martens. On top he had on a black t-shirt and black button down shirt of the top. It was tucked into his jeans and the sleeves were rolled up at the elbows. His hair was in its usual disarray and he smelled delicious. "Edward! Come here!" Alice yelled.

Edward looked up and his eyes darkened behind his glasses. "You look fucking gorgeous, Bella. I can't wait until I see the whole package."

"Well, here's a sneak peak of what's underneath," I said as I untied my robe. I held it open and Edward licked his lips as he saw my sexy underwear.

"Fuck me," he whispered. "Do we have to perform tonight? I'd rather take you back into the bedroom and fuck you fifty ways to Sunday."

"Later, baby," I said as I closed my robe.

"EDWARD! Now!" Alice said as she walked to where we were standing. She grabbed Edward's arm and dragged him away. He pouted his lips as the evil

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sprite dragged him to the kitchen. I chuckled and went into the bedroom to get dressed. As I put my clothes on, I could hear Edward and Alice bickering. It sounded like Alice wanted to attack Edward's hair with a straightening iron and he was adamant against it. I was nearly dressed when Edward ran into the bedroom, with a look of terror on his face.

"Save me from my evil sister," he begged.

"What did she do?" I laughed.

"She tried to do something to my hair, with this torturous looking thing," he said as he looked over his shoulder. "Is she like this with you, all the time?"

"Yes, Edward. I've learned to deal with it. You obviously like it," I said as I flipped my own hair over my shoulder.

"That's because you look hot. She'll make me look gay," he whined.

"Edward, ignore the pixie," I said as I kissed his nose. "She'll go away."

"Can you hold me? I've been traumatized," Edward mumbled pathetically.

I held open my arms and he embraced me. He nuzzled my hair and his hands moved further down my body and cupped my ass. He pressed my hips against his and I could feel his growing arousal. "Edward, don't even think about it."

"Think about what?" he said as he kissed my neck.

"Getting any," I teased. "We need to go do our sound check, like now," I said as I looked at the clock in our bedroom. "You'll get laid tonight. I promise."

"You're no fun," he grumbled.

"Well, think about this," I whispered in his ear, "When my legs are wrapped around your waist and you're buried so deep in my pussy. Imagine that feeling, how good it will feel. When I come around your cock, clenching my muscles,



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milking you dry." Edward whimpered and I slipped out of his arms.

"You're evil, Bella," he moaned.

"I know. But you love me," I said as I skipped out of the room, my shoes in my hand.

"Tease!"

I giggled and slipped my boots onto my feet. Alice and Rose had cleaned up the 'beauty salon' in our kitchen. "Are you guys coming tonight?"

"We'll be there with bells on. Angela and Ben are coming too," Rose replied. "I'm going to take this one back to the dorm and we're going to get ready. See you later, Bella."

"Bye and thanks for the help in the beauty department," I said as I hugged them both.

"You're welcome. Your fiancé, however, is a douche," Alice grumbled.

"No, he's not. He's set in his ways. Besides, I happen to agree with him about the skinny jeans," I said truthfully. "Edward can pull off most anything, but skinny jeans are a definite no. Skinny jeans on ANY guy are a definite no."

"Ugh! Fine," Alice said as she kissed my cheek. "Hasta la bye bye."

Edward walked out of the bedroom, with an adorable scowl on his face. He narrowed his eyes and darted into the guest bedroom to pick up his guitar, along with mine. "Are you ready to go?"

"Yep," I said as I picked up my keys. I grabbed my driver's license and debit card and placed it into Edward's wallet. "Can I drive?"

"Why?" Edward asked.

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"Because, I want to?" I countered.

Edward nodded and slipped on his jacket. He put his guitar over his shoulder and picked my case with his hand. We walked down the hall and went down to the parking garage. We drove to Eclipse and did a quick sound check. I took the time to look at Jasper and Emmett. They were all dressed similarly to Edward. However, Jasper was wearing a grey button down and Emmett was wearing just a black t-shirt. He said that he tried on the shirt that Alice gave him but it was too tight.

After our sound check, we went into the green room and there was some food, pop, water and alcohol for us. We all ate something light. I grabbed a bottle of water for the stage and we said our prayers before we headed out into the packed club. Edward slipped off his glasses and put them into the glasses case. He blinked a few times and shook his head.

"It's weird not being able to see," he chuckled.

"You'll get used to it," I responded. "Are we ready?" The guys all nodded and we huddled up for a group hug. Jasper and Emmett headed out to the stage and Edward pulled me back.

"I love you, baby. We're going to do awesome," he said with his crooked smirk.

"I love you, too," I said, kissing his lips. I pulled his hand and we went out onto the stage. The stage was dark, but not black. Edward caught Kellan's eyes and over the loud speaker boomed his voice.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, it is Eclipse's pleasure to bring to you Breaking Midnight," his voice echoed through the club. The crowd roared and the lights came up on the stage. Emmett clicked off the beat for our first song, "Land of Confusion." The guitars and drums came in strong and loud. I added some keyboard to it and Edward moved closer to his mic. His lips curled and his voice carried through the club. The girls in the club swooned at his voice, his face and his body. However, he caught my eyes with his and he winked. He'd

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be going home with me tonight. We finished the song and the crowd erupted in cheers.

Edward switched to his acoustic and I grabbed my new acoustic and stepped out from behind the keyboard. We began the opening strains of "Rhythm of Love" by the Plain White T's. When I stepped away from the keyboard, I saw Rose, Alice, Angela and Ben in the front of the stage, swaying to our music. Edward and I took turns singing the verses and the three of us, Jasper included, came together to create this really cool three part harmony, with Edward singing the melody.

After a few songs, I stepped forward to the microphone, taking center stage. I had talked to Jasper and Emmett about this and we had rehearsed it after University Singers for an earlier show. I wanted to sing a song for Edward and we figured out a perfect song for him. For us.

"This song is for my fiancé, Edward," I said into the microphone. Edward's brows furrowed and Jasper put a stool on the stage and forced him to sit. He gave him a perplexed look and he shook his finger, telling him to stay. The audience laughed.

I started playing Heart's "Crazy On You," morphing my voice to portray the feelings I felt behind the lyrics.

*If we still have time, we might still get by  
Every time I think about it, I wanna cry  
With bombs and the devil, and the kids keep comin'  
No way to breathe easy, no time to be young*

*But I tell myself that I was doin' all right  
There's nothin' left to do at night  
But to go crazy on you  
Crazy on you  
Let me go crazy, crazy on you, oh*

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*My love is the evenin' breeze touchin' your skin  
The gentle, sweet singin' of leaves in the wind  
The whisper that calls after you in the night  
And kisses your ear in the early moonlight  
And you don't need to wonder, you're doing fine  
My love, the pleasure's mine*

*Let me go crazy on ya  
Crazy on you  
Let me go crazy, crazy on you, ohhh*

*Wild man's world is cryin' in pain  
What you gonna do when everybody's insane  
So afraid of one who's so afraid of you  
What you gonna do...ohhh...*

*(Ah-ah-ah-ah)*

*Ooooo...Crazy on ya  
Crazy on you  
Let me go crazy, crazy on you*

*I was a willow last night in my dream  
I bent down over a clear running stream  
Sang you the song that I heard up above  
And you kept me alive with your sweet flowing love*

*Crazy  
Yeah, crazy on ya  
Let me go crazy, crazy on you, oh  
Crazy on ya  
Crazy on you  
Let me go crazy, crazy on you, yeah*

*(Ah-ah-ah-ah)*

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*Crazy on ya  
Crazy on you  
Let me go crazy, crazy on you, ohhh...*

After the song, I turned and looked at Edward and his eyes were glistening with tears. He managed to pull himself together and he put my guitar in the stand. He enveloped me in an embrace and the audience reacted. They cheered for us. Edward gave me a chaste kiss. "I love you baby. I have a surprise for you, too," he mumbled against my lips. He pulled away and took my hand. He sat me down on the same stool and slipped behind the keyboard.

"This is for my beautiful fiancée, as well. Thank you for everything, baby," he said into his microphone behind the keyboard. His hands ran over the keys as he began "Just the Way You Are," by Bruno Mars.

*Oh her eyes, her eyes  
Make the stars look like they're not shining  
Her hair, her hair  
Falls perfectly without her trying*

*She's so beautiful  
And I tell her every day*

*Yeah I know, I know  
When I compliment her  
She won't believe me  
And it's so, it's so  
Sad to think she don't see what I see*

*But every time she asks me do I look okay  
I say*

*When I see your face  
There's not a thing that I would change  
Cause you're amazing  
Just the way you are*

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*And when you smile,  
The whole world stops and stares for awhile  
Cause girl you're amazing  
Just the way you are*

*Her nails, her nails  
I could kiss them all day if she'd let me  
Her laugh, her laugh  
She hates but I think its so sexy*

*She's so beautiful  
And I tell her every day*

*Oh you know, you know, you know  
Id never ask you to change  
If perfect is what you're searching for  
Then just stay the same*

*So don't even bother asking  
If you look okay  
You know I say*

*When I see your face  
There's not a thing that I would change  
Cause you're amazing  
Just the way you are  
And when you smile,  
The whole world stops and stares for awhile  
Cause girl you're amazing  
Just the way you are*

*The way you are  
The way you are  
Girl you're amazing  
Just the way you are*

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*When I see your face  
There's not a thing that I would change  
Cause you're amazing  
Just the way you are  
And when you smile,  
The whole world stops and stares for awhile  
Cause girl you're amazing  
Just the way you are*

I managed to not cry as Edward sang his song for me. I even picked up my guitar and began strumming along with them as he sang. He chuckled at an instrumental break, but he knew why. Afterward, he came back around to the front of the stage and kissed me sweetly on the lips. The crowd went wild and I smiled against his warm lips. "I love you, Edward."

"I love you, more, Bella," he said. "Let's finish this."

I nodded and got back behind the keyboard. We finished the rest of the set without incident. The audience cheered and begged for an encore after we finished our final song, which was "Maybe" by Sick Puppies. We obliged them and played a few songs that we had played before and they were happy. After our final encore number, "Bring Me To Life," by Evanescence, the lights flipped off covering the stage in darkness. We quickly exited the stage and went to the green room.

"Isabella Marie Swan."

"Edward Anthony Masen Cullen."

We both had spoken at the same time and broke into a fit of giggles. We both turned to Jasper and Emmett. They looked completely innocent, but we knew otherwise.

"You both knew that we were both planning on singing a song for each other and you managed to keep it quiet?" Edward squeaked. "I think Hell just froze over."

## La Cantante

"Definitely. However, thank you for the song. It was perfect," I said as I wrapped my arms around his waist.

"Yours was phenomenal," Edward said as he ran his fingers through my hair. "I love you, baby."

"I love you, too," I said as I kissed him. "You're all sweaty."

"So are you, beautiful," he laughed against my lips.

"Oh GAG ME!" Jasper said as he imitated throwing up. Edward took a pillow from the couch of the green room and threw it at him. He neatly dodged it and laughed. There was a knock at the door. Jasper was still laughing when he opened the door. We heard some hushed tones and Jasper opened the door further. To our surprise, in walked Garrett.

"Holy crap you guys," Garrett gushed. "You fucking rocked!"

"Garrett! What a surprise," Edward said as he released his hold on me. He shook Garrett's hand and he pulled him into a one-armed guy hug. "What are you doing here?"

"Kellan asked my cousin to come and listen to this awesome new band that he had playing at his club," Garrett explained. "My cousin, McKenna, is an executive for an independent recording studio. She was supposed to come but couldn't, so she asked me."

"So, what did you think?" I asked nervously.

"Well, first off, congratulations on your engagement," Garrett said as he pulled me into a hug. He took my left hand and whistled lowly. "Damn, Edward. That is one huge rock."

Edward puffed up his chest and smiled proudly. I rolled my eyes and giggled. "Don't encourage him. The next thing I know, I'll have a planetoid on my finger."



## La Cantante

Garrett kissed my cheek and smiled warmly. "Anyhow, back to your question Bella, I'm thoroughly impressed. I've worked with musicians and bands before. This was way before I was a choral director, during my hard rocker days. However, I've never seen such a polished show from a group of college students. You act like a professional group on stage and the blend of musicianship and stage charisma from all of you is executed very well. I took a few videos and I'm planning on showing McKenna your show. Don't be surprised if she calls you," Garrett smiled. "Do you have a demo CD?"

Edward nodded and reached into his messenger bag. He pulled out a demo CD that we had made from our last rehearsal at Brandon. As he was near his jacket, he pulled out his glasses and slipped them onto his face. Garrett chuckled. "Finally caved and got glasses, Edward?"

"What do you mean, 'finally caved?'" Edward asked.

"Dude, you've been squinting for years now. I'm surprised your dad didn't drag you, kicking and screaming, to the eye doctor," Garrett laughed.

He rolled his eyes. "Bella got me to go. I'm amazed at how much I was missing out on. However, in a few months, I'm getting contacts. The eye doctor wanted me to get used the glasses first," Edward explained.

"You look good, though. I'm going to go. My wife is about to pop with our first child. If I'm not home before eleven, she's going to kick my ass," Garrett said nervously. "Edward are you still planning on doing your observation hours with me?"

Edward nodded. "I'll send you an email this week and we can schedule when I can come out."

"Awesome. The treble choir girls are looking forward to working with you. However, they will be heartbroken to find out that you're engaged," he laughed. "See you guys later. Again, awesome job." Garrett darted out of the door and waved as he left.

## La Cantante

Kellan stepped in as Garrett was leaving. "Awesome set tonight guys. If you want to leave your equipment here and pick it up tomorrow, that would be fine."

"Thanks, Kellan."

"Also, here's your payment from your last performance. The \$500 plus 5% of the clubs earnings for that evening." Kellan handed Edward an envelope. He ripped it open and his eyes bugged out of his head.

"\$1500?" he squeaked.

"You guys are money makers," Kellan said. "We're even more packed tonight. Expect the next check to be bigger. The VIP area is set up for you and your friends. Enjoy it."

Kellan stepped out of the room and we all crowded around Edward. He held the check gingerly, almost expecting it to spontaneously combust. I looked at it and saw that it was made out to Breaking Midnight. I made mental note for us to set up a checking account to deposit these checks into. After we put our paycheck into Edward's messenger bag, we headed up to the VIP area of the club. As we walked up the stairs, I kept thinking that my life, despite its drama and issues, couldn't be more perfect. I had wonderful friends in Rosalie, Alice and Jasper, in addition to Angela and Ben. I had a wonderful brother who was too loud at times, but still he was awesome. I had great family with my father, my mom and Phil, Carlisle and Esme. However, most importantly, I had the most wonderful fiancé, who was loving, kind, generous, and gorgeous. When we reached the VIP area, I pulled Edward into a corner and I grabbed his face and kissed him. He was shocked but eagerly returned my kiss. "I love you, Edward. Always."

"I love you, so much, beautiful. My singer," he whispered. He wrapped his arms around me and held me close to his chest. I buried my face in his shoulder and smiled. I eventually extricated myself from his embrace and we sat down with our friends. For the rest of the evening, we laughed and had fun. Edward and the boys drank some beers, while the girls decided not to. As we were

## La Cantante

getting ready to go, I felt like someone was watching us. I grabbed Edward's hand and stopped him. "What's wrong, Bella?"

"I don't know. I have this feeling like we're being watched," I said as I looked into his green eyes. Edward tensed up and looked around the parking lot and the club furtively.

"Let's get back to the apartment, love," Edward said tightly. He pulled my hand and slipped into the car. We raced home and it almost seemed like we didn't breathe until we were in our apartment, with the door locked. I tried to shake the feeling of us being watched but I couldn't. Edward held me close as we went to bed, but neither of us slept. We just held each other. Trying to assuage our fears of the unknown, whatever that may be.

**A/N: Here's Breaking Midnight's set list for this show:**

**Land of Confusion - Disturbed**

**Rhythm of Love - Plain White T's**

**Alone - Heart**

**Far Away - Nickelback**

**Easier to Run - Linkin Park**

**Angel - Sarah McLachlan**

**Savior - Rise Against**

**For the First Time - The Script**

**Crazy On You - Heart**

**Just the Way You Are - Bruno Mars**

**The Middle - Jimmy Eat World**

**Hanging by a Moment - Lifehouse**

**Firework - Katy Perry**

**Maybe - Sick Puppies**

**Grenade - Bruno Mars**

**My Love - Sia**

**Home - Daughtry**

**Bring Me To Life - Evanescence**

# Revenge is Sweet, or Is It?

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 59: Revenge is Sweet...or is it?

### JacobPOV

Fucking Bella. I drove across the fucking country for her. With the help of Quil and Embry, I had procured a car, money, a new identity, and was on my way to get my girl. Sam had turned into a pussy and kicked me out. I think Emily had told the cops because they raided my hideout soon after I had left on my cross-country trek to Bella. I turned to my *real* friends for help. They came through for me. They found me a car, a piece of crap, but it ran. They talked to a friend of theirs and got me a new ID. My name now was Jared Hoffman and I was twenty-one. I had chopped my hair off so I couldn't be easily recognized. They also came through with a lot of money. When I left, I had about five grand in my pocket in cash.

I made good time when I reached Emerson. I had been on the road for about five days. I checked into a fleabag motel and got some good sleep. The first time in nearly five days. I also showered and got the grime off my body. After taking care of the basics like showering, eating and sleeping, I headed to Emerson University. I pulled on a cap and blended in with the rest of the students. I knew that Bella was a music geek so she would be at the music building a lot. I hung out there and I saw her leave the building early in the afternoon, with the tool. They were laughing and holding hands. I followed them as they walked to their car. The tool drives a *VOLVO*? What a fucking pussy. I memorized his license plate number and what the car looked like.

As I was walking back to my car, I overheard a blonde chick talking about an

## La Cantante

'Edward.' That was the tool's name, right? She mentioned something about his band playing at a local club called Eclipse.

"Hey, doll face, when is this band playing at Eclipse?" I asked, flashing my teeth.

"Um, tonight around 8. They're the house band and they're fucking awesome. The lead singer, Edward Cullen, is so hot," she gushed.

"Right. Do they have any other band members besides this Edward guy?" I asked, nonchalantly.

"Well, there's Jasper. He's the bassist. Emmett is the drummer. They added a fourth member, a girl. I think her name is Bella. She plays guitar, sings and is the keyboardist. The rumor is that she and Edward are engaged. Lucky bitch," Doll face answered.

"Where is Eclipse?" I asked, trying to shake the thought of my Bella being engaged to the tool.

"It's about a half hour from here, in the next town over. Will I see you there?" she asked.

"Possibly, doll face," I said. "Thanks for the information."

I looked down at my watch and saw that it was nearly two. I went back to my motel and figured I needed to change. If I was going 'clubbing' I needed to look the part. I put on a pair of black jeans and a black t-shirt. I looked at my reflection and I appeared to be menacing. My shorn haircut made my face look more angular, more vicious. My muscles rippled in my t-shirt and I knew if I didn't get my Bella tonight, I'd be getting some pussy. After I got changed, I went to the local library and looked up directions to Eclipse. The pretty blonde was right. It was close, about half hour away. I jotted down the directions and logged off the computer. I went back out to my car and checked my watch again. It was nearly seven. I decided to head to the club after stopping at a fast food joint to get some food. I filled up on several hamburgers and fries.

## La Cantante

I drove to the club and noticed there was a line out the door. It moved quickly and I was ushered in with no fuss. The ID that I had was quite good. I slipped it back in my wallet and walked to the bar, ordering a beer. I scoped out a few chicks that would make suitable replacements for Bella if I couldn't get her tonight. I honed my attention to one and sauntered over to her. I flirted with her for a bit. However, her voice was too annoying so I said needed to go to the bathroom and I moved across the room, away from her. As I moved, the manager announced the band and they entered the stage. Emmett settled behind the drums. Some blonde dude picked up a guitar. Bella stood behind the keyboard and the tool picked up his guitar. Emmett began clicking his drum sticks and the band began. I hated to admit it, but they were actually pretty good. Until the middle part where Bella sang to the tool and the tool sang to my Bella. That's when I saw her ring. The fucking tool got her a ring. A ring with a diamond the size of Pluto.

*God damn it!*

They finished the set of music and the crowd went absolutely berserk. The band went into a small room and I got another beer. About a half hour later, they emerged from the room and headed to the VIP area. I watched Bella like a hawk. I watched as she pulled the tool into a corner and kissed him. I nearly threw up right there. I watched them as they danced and drank. I watched them as they left and I could see the fear in Bella's eyes. The tool's Volvo sped away and I turned back into the club to get a girl. I found one who looked almost exactly like Bella and I crashed my lips against hers. She eagerly responded. She grabbed my hand and pulled me to the back hallway. We fucked each other in the hallway from behind; her pussy was tight and wet. I exploded in her body and slid out of her. She turned around and asked for my number. I rattled off some random number and kissed her before I left. I drove back to my motel and I heaved into the toilet once I got there. That tool was going to marry my girl. Fuck. Over my dead, rotting corpse.

xx LC xx

I watched Bella and the tool for about a week. I wanted to wait until the perfect time to get her. She was never alone. She always had someone with her. Most

of the time, it was the tool.

*I fucking hate him.*

About a week after that, Bella left in the tool's Volvo. Alone. My time had come. I followed her to a grocery store. What a coincidence. She ran inside and I went to the tool's car. I easily opened the car and got in. I sat in the driver's seat, hotwiring the car so it was idling as Bella returned from the store. She was talking on the phone and she was not aware that the car was running. She walked to the driver's seat.

"Hello, Bella," I seethed.

She screamed and dropped her phone. She scrambled and picked it up, running back toward the store. I easily caught up to her and wrapped my arms around her. She became dead weight and stomped on my foot. She got away again and I threw her over my shoulder. I put her in the backseat of the car and sped out of the parking lot.

It was snowing heavily and it made it hard to see. Bella was whimpering in the back seat.

"Jacob, what do you want?" she cried.

"You," I replied.

"I'm not yours, Jacob. You need to understand that," she said quietly.

"No. You need to understand that you will always be mine, Bella. Not his," I spat. The car swerved on an icy spot. I managed to straighten the car.

"Where are you taking me?" she asked.

"I don't know yet," I answered honestly. "Just sit back there and shut up."



## La Cantante

I put both of my hands on the steering wheel. I hated the tool. I hated his car. I hated that he had my Bella. I hit the steering wheel and turned onto the highway. The snow had picked up and Bella was sniffing in the backseat. It was getting harder and harder to see.

I turned around, glaring at Bella, "Will you fucking shut up? All your crying will do nothing," I barked.

"Jacob! Look out!" Bella screamed as she pointed toward the window. I turned my body and saw a huge truck barreling towards us. I swerved the car and it slid, but didn't react. The truck came at us head on and blackness consumed me.

**A/N: Short chapter...and the demise of Jacob. He's gone. Never to return.**

# Hell

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*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 60: Hell

### EPOV

After our show at Eclipse, things had settled down a bit. Bella and I got into a routine. A routine that I liked. It involved a lot of sex. I was not complaining, at all. Bella was a sex goddess. She could always make me feel good. However, she got a bug up her ass about using whipped cream and was determined to get it. She took the keys to my car and left one evening. I chuckled at her and turned to my homework after she kissed me goodbye. She told me that she was going to Super Target and needed to pick up some other supplies. She'd be back in an hour, at most. I decided to check my email and saw that there was an email from Garrett.

*To: Edward Cullen*

*From: Garrett Sisko*

*Re: Breaking Midnight*

*Dear Edward,*

*I brought the demo CD to my cousin, McKenna and she absolutely loved it. She wants to meet with you guys as a band to discuss some things. Possibly signing you with her label.*

*Also, we need to figure out when you're going to come in to work with the*

## La Cantante

*groups for your observation hours. Not a big deal. Think about it and email me your schedule. Say hi to your fiancée for me and I'll talk to you soon!*

*Yours in music,*

*Garrett*

I was going to begin writing a response when my phone rang. It was Emmett. "Hey, Em. I got some good news," I said as I smiled into the phone.

"Dude, it's Bella," he said, his voice quivering.

My stomach dropped to my feet and my heart stopped. "What happened?" I asked, panicking.

"I was on the phone with her and I heard Jacob's voice. He has her," Emmett said, crying.

"Holy fuck," I barked. "Can you pick me up? Bella has my car."

"I'm on my way as we speak. Jasper is with me," Emmett said quietly. "He sounded pissed before the phone call cut out. Edward, I'm fucking terrified."

"Me too, Em," I said, my voice sounding so small.

"I'm outside."

"On my way," I said as I grabbed my keys, wallet, and jacket. I ran down the stairs and got into Emmett's truck. "Where are we going?"

"Bella said she was at Super Target. We're starting there. I called the detectives," Emmett explained. We drove down the street toward the highway to the store. It was snowing heavily and traffic was moving slowly. We eased onto the highway and moved at a snail's pace. I was getting antsy. I could see up in the distance the blinking lights of police cars and ambulances.

## La Cantante

"Looks like there was an accident," Jasper said. "Doesn't surprise me. The roads suck."

I looked closely at the accident scene and I immediately recognized the car. "Emmett, pull over. Pull over, now!" I screamed.

"Dude, what the fuck?" Emmett grumbled.

"That's my car," I cried. As soon as we were stopped, I jumped out of the car, only to be stopped by a pair of officers.

"Sir, you can't go there. It's an accident scene," one of the officers said to me.

"That's my car. My fiancée is in there," I cried. "Please, let me by."

The front of the Volvo was completely crushed. The driver's side was obliterated. Whoever was driving probably didn't survive.

*Please. Please don't let it be Bella.*

I sank to my knees and I could feel my tears fall down my cheeks. "No, please. No. Let her be alright," I cried. "She has to be alright."

Jasper came behind me and put his arm around me. I sobbed into his chest, my heart being ripped out. He held me, soothing me as best as he could. "Edward, she's going to be alright."

I shook my head no and cried harder. I heard a sickening crunch and I pulled away from Jasper. I looked at the accident and I saw the EMTs pull out someone from the car. The stretcher was covered in a sheet. The sheet was drenched with blood. I turned around and heaved my lunch out of my stomach. "Sir? What's your fiancée's name?" asked one of the officers.

I wiped my mouth and looked at him. "Bella. Isabella Swan," I answered quietly.

## La Cantante

"Come with me," he said as he grabbed my elbow. He led me to an ambulance where Bella was laying.

"Is she?" I began.

"Are you family?" the EMT questioned.

Emmett appeared out of nowhere. "I'm her brother and this is her husband. Is she alright?"

"She was lucky. She had her seatbelt on and was on the opposite side of the vehicle when it was hit. The driver was not so fortunate," the EMT replied.

"You can come in. We're heading to the hospital in a few moments."

I crawled into the ambulance and looked at my Bella. She was intubated and she had a large contusion on the left side of her face. "Hey, baby. I'm here. I'm never leaving your side until I see your beautiful brown eyes," I cried as tears fell down my cheeks. "I need you to come back to me, Bella. I thought I lost you. I need you. I can't survive without you."

"We're getting ready to go. Do you want to ride with us, sir?" the EMT asked.

"Can I?" I asked. He nodded.

Emmett asked the EMT what hospital we were going to. Luckily it was the trauma center that my father worked at. I called my dad.

"Carlisle Cullen," he barked into his phone.

"Dad? Bella's been in an accident," I cried. "Can you meet us in the emergency room?"

"Is she alright?" he asked, clearly upset.

"I don't know, Dad. Please meet us there," I bawled.

## La Cantante

"I'll be there, Edward. I love you, son."

"I love you, too, Dad," I said as I hung up. I put my phone into my pocket and picked up Bella's hand. She looked so small and fragile. "Please wake up, beautiful."

The doors of the ambulance shut and we sped off to the hospital. I gently ran my hands through Bella's hair. It was caked with blood. There was a large gash on the left side of her face, near her hairline. Her hand looked swollen and her breathing was labored, even with breathing tube. I felt the tears fall down my cheeks and I tried to calm myself. For the sake of my Bella.

We arrived at the hospital and we were ushered through the emergency room doors. My father was standing there, his face in a worried frown. He walked with the EMTs. "Tell me the status of the patient."

"BP is 120 over 65, pulse 40, resps 25. She was unconscious when we arrived on scene and hasn't regained consciousness on the ride over. Has a 4 inch lac on her left side, near her hair line, several fractured ribs, possible collapsed lung," the EMT rattled off.

Carlisle slipped off his stethoscope and listened to her heart and her breathing. "Take her to trauma one. I'll be in there momentarily," Carlisle said. He turned to me. "Edward, you need to let us take care of her."

"I can't leave her," I whimpered.

"I've called your mother. She's on her way. Bella is going to get the best possible care. I promise you," Carlisle said as he pushed me away from her gurney. "I know you love her. So do I, but we need to take care of her injuries. I'll find you as soon as we get her stabilized."

Emmett came in and he was on the phone. Carlisle looked at him and Emmett came next to me, supporting my weight. "She's going to be fine, Edward." He turned on his heel and ran to the trauma room.

## La Cantante

I couldn't take it. My body collapsed and I fell in a heap on the floor. "Edward, you got to be strong. Come on, man," Emmett said as he pulled on my arms. I moved closer to the wall and curled into a ball, sobbing into my hands.

I can't lose her. I just got her and I can't lose her. No. No. NO! She can't die. She can't leave me. God, if you're listening, please save her. Take me. I need her to live. PLEASE!

I felt two sets of hands on my arms and I was forcefully brought to my feet. I vaguely remembered moving to the waiting area. I was still curled in a ball, praying for my girl. She needed to be alright.

"Edward?" I heard.

"Bella?" I asked, looking up. It wasn't her. It was Esme. She sat down next to me and held her arms open. I lost it. If I could have, I would have crawled into her lap like I did when I was a boy. "Mom! She's so broken. I need her to be okay. She has to be okay. I can't be without her," I sobbed. She held me tightly, never saying a word, just letting me cry.

"Edward?" Carlisle called. I looked up at him, my vision blurry from my tears.

I stood up and walked to him. "How is she?"

Carlisle took my elbow and looked at Esme. We all walked to a small room near the trauma room. Emmett and Jasper were behind us with Alice and Rosalie. We sat down on the couches. "She's got a very serious concussion. There's no swelling of the brain, but we need to keep her for observation. She also hasn't regained consciousness. She's breathing on her own and responds to painful stimuli. However, she's not out of the woods. We need to monitor her head injury. Have you called her family?" Carlisle asked.

"I called my parents. They are on the next available flights," Emmett said sadly. "Will she be okay?"

## La Cantante

"We won't know until she wakes up. We're taking her up for observation," Carlisle.

"Can I see her?" I asked, quietly.

"Technically, we can only allow family, but seeing as I have some pull with the administration, I've cleared you and Emmett to see her. However, only one at a time," Carlisle said. He led us back to the trauma room. "Oh, before I forget, they needed to remove Bella's jewelry. Here are her rings and necklace," Carlisle said as he handed me a small plastic bag with Bella's engagement ring, promise ring and Cullen Crest. I choked back a sob and tried to stay strong for my girl.

"I'll go first, Edward," Emmett said as he clapped me on the shoulder. He slipped into the trauma room and I watched from the window. He walked up to Bella. She had wires and tubes sticking out of her. She had several wires attached to her head, monitoring her brain activity. She looked so tiny, so helpless next to him. He picked up her hand and I could see him cry. He sat down and ran his hand across her cheek as she slept. He slowly got up and walked to the exit. He pulled me into a hug. I felt his tears against my shoulders. I wrapped my arms around his waist and patted him. He pulled away abruptly and walked away, not looking at me.

I pushed the trauma room door open and walked into the sterile room. I could hear the steady beeping of Bella's heart monitor. I moved slowly to the same side that Emmett had stood by. I grabbed a stool and rolled it by her side. "Hey baby," I said quietly. I gently brushed my fingers along her bruised cheek. "I miss you. So fucking much. I need you to wake up. I need to see your beautiful brown eyes. I need to hear your beautiful voice, your wonderful laugh, and your snarky comments. Bella, I can't live without you. Please wake up. I love you so much. I need you," I cried.

"Edward, it's time to move her. I've arrange for you to stay with her. There's a cot in her room," Carlisle stated. "I'm also not going home tonight. I want to monitor her condition."



## La Cantante

"Dad, I appreciate you being here. I know you are not an emergency room doctor, but I don't know what I would have done if you weren't here," I said quietly, brushing a hair off Bella's face.

"I may not be an emergency room doctor, but I'm a doctor. It's my duty to ensure the health of my patients and Bella is my patient," he said as he stood next to me. "She's going to be fine. Her EEG looks good. I watched it as you were talking to her. She recognizes your voice. That's a good thing."

"I just need her to wake up," I murmured.

"Her brain took a heavy beating and her sleeping is the best thing for it. Her body needs to heal. She'll wake up when she's ready. However, I have a job for you. You need to call your professors and inform them of the accident. I know that that's the last thing on your mind, but it'll focus your mind elsewhere," Carlisle admonished. "I'll stay with Bella until she's transferred."

I nodded and walked out of the trauma room. I picked up my phone and dialed all of my professors informing them of Bella's accident. I told them that I would not be in classes for the rest of the week and that I would inform them about Bella's status as soon as I found out. My professors were understanding and gave me extensions on my due assignments and would work with Bella for when she was out of the hospital. After an hour, Carlisle came to Esme and I, who were the only ones left in the waiting area. Emmett had to take everyone back to campus. He escorted us to the third floor, to the room where the put Bella.

My mom and I walked into her room. She was still attached to the machines and her heart monitor was beeping steadily. I sat down in the chair next to her bed and held her hand. I gently stroked her hair and hummed her lullaby to her. Esme was sniffing and I looked up to see her crying. She walked to me and wrapped her arms around my chest, holding me to her. "She's going to be alright, Edward. It's hard now, but you have to have faith."

I nodded and cried into Esme's arms. She pulled away and gave me a watery smile. "I'm going to get something to eat. Do you want anything?"

## La Cantante

"No, thanks. I don't have much of an appetite," I mumbled.

"You have to eat something. I'll bring up some food from the cafeteria," she said, clucking her tongue. She kissed my forehead and left the room before I could object. I looked back at Bella's sleeping form. Her breaths were shallow, but even. Her face was bruised, but still beautiful. I took off my glasses and rested my head in my hands, staring at my beautiful girl. My love. My life. My future.

She had to wake up, she just had to.

xx LC xx

I managed to get some sleep in the tiny cot in the hospital room. Carlisle checked on Bella twice during the night. Nothing had changed. Emmett had returned with some fresh clothes for me and told me he was picking up Charlie from the airport. Renee was coming in tomorrow. I took a quick shower in the private stall in Bella's room. Esme stayed with her as I showered.

I talked to Bella until my voice was raw. I sang to her. I did everything in my power to get her to wake up, but she didn't. Her room was filled with flowers, balloons and stuffed animals, all wishing her a speedy recovery. Carlisle continued to monitor her progress. He said that she was still responding to my voice as indicated by the EEG. He asked me to talk and he showed me the spikes in the printout. I gave a weak smile, but wasn't truly encouraged.

A few hours later, Emmett and Charlie came into the hospital room. Charlie looked much healthier than he did at Christmas, although he looked exhausted. Charlie sat down in my chair and held Bella's hand. He cooed and talked to her, begging her to open her eyes. He had no luck, but he remained seated by her side. There was a knock at the door. It was Detective Raisor.

"How is she?" she asked kindly.

"Not awake," I said bitterly.

## La Cantante

"I'm sorry, Edward," she said as she laid a hand on my arm. I jerked away and I immediately felt guilty. "I know you're hurting, Edward. It's okay. However, I have some information about the driver of the car. His name was Jacob Black. Although, I'm certain you all knew that. He was killed on impact. He won't be back to harm Bella again."

"That's great," I said quietly. "Now, can you get her to wake up? Can you turn back time and prevent this from happening? Can you make her be okay?"

Charlie got up and pulled me into a hug. I sobbed against his form, sinking to my knees. He held onto me. "It's okay, son. Let it out. We're here for you. We love you. Bella loves you. She's going to be okay. She's too stubborn not to be."

I pulled away and curled up into a ball. Charlie sat down on the floor with me. He rubbed my shoulders. I felt Emmett sit next to me and he patted my knee uncomfortably. "I know you're probably tired of hearing it. However, you need to pull it together, man. She's my sister and she needs you to be strong. I know you're hurting. But she needs you," Emmett whispered.

I nodded against my knees and slowly got up. "I'm going to get some air. Call me if anything changes."

"You got it, Edward," Emmett said.

I grabbed my coat and walked out of the hospital. I sat down on one of the benches next to a nurse who was smoking. "I don't mean to be a pest, but can I bum one off you?" I asked.

"Sure," she said as she took out a cigarette. She also handed me a lighter. I put the cigarette in my mouth and lit it, inhaling deeply. I held the noxious gas in my chest until it burned.

"Thanks," I said as I blew the smoke out of my lungs. I gave her back the lighter. She stuck it in her pocket.

"Are you okay?" she asked.

"No. My fiancée was kidnapped by a psycho ex-boyfriend and was in a car accident. He was killed and she's upstairs, in a coma," I said as I took another pull off the cigarette.

"I'm sorry. At least the psycho ex-boyfriend is dead," she said sympathetically. "I'm Nessie, by the way."

"Edward," I said as I leaned back on the bench.

"You don't normally smoke, do you?" she asked.

"Nope, but I needed to do something to get my mind off my fiancée. She'll probably kick my ass when she wakes up if she found out I was smoking," I chuckled darkly.

"Here's some gum for when you're done," she said as she gave me a piece. "I hope your fiancée gets better soon." Nessie got up and headed inside. She patted my shoulder and walked into the hospital. I finished the cigarette and put it out. I popped the piece of gum into my mouth and walked back up to Bella's room. I stopped by the bathroom and washed my hands. I looked at myself and I looked tired and drawn. I had deep purplish bruises under my eyes. My hair looked like I stuck my finger into an electric socket and I looked thinner.

I walked back down the hallway to Bella's room. Emmett had left and Charlie was sitting on my chair. He was watching some sports show on the television. "No change?" I croaked.

"No, unfortunately not. Did you go outside to smoke?" Charlie asked.

"Yeah. I don't smoke. I just needed to get my mind off how everything is FUBARed," I said.

"Just don't let it happen again. You know what happened to me," Charlie said.

## La Cantante

"I had one cigarette, Charlie. However, it won't happen again," I said as I gently caressed Bella's cheek. "Where are you staying while you're in town?"

"I haven't got that far. Emmett picked me up and brought me straight here," Charlie said.

"You can stay at our place," I said, reaching into my pocket of my jeans and handing him my keys. "I'm staying here until she wakes up."

"Thanks, Edward," he said as he turned his attention back to the television. We sat in a comfortable silence until Emmett had come back to take Charlie to our apartment.

When Charlie left, I took his spot next to Bella and I laced my fingers with hers. I prayed that she would wake up soon. I kissed her tiny fingers and laid my head next to her thigh. My eyes eventually drooped and I fell asleep.

When I woke up, I felt a gentle tugging on my hair. I turned my head and Bella's hand was weaved in my coppery locks. "Bella?"

She opened her eyes and gave me a weak smile. "Edward? What happened?"

"You're awake," I said, tears falling down my cheeks. "Oh, thank God, you're awake." I leaned forward and kissed her forehead. Bella scrunched her nose.

"Have you been smoking?" she asked.

"Um, yeah. Just one, though. I needed to focus my mind on something else," I said sheepishly. "Never again, baby."

"What happened? Edward? Tell me," she implored.

"What do you remember?"

"Going to the store and that's it," she replied.

## La Cantante

"You went to Super Target because you wanted whipped cream. Jacob apparently followed you there and kidnapped you. You were in a car accident because of the snow. Jacob was killed instantly," I explained.

"Oh. What happened to the car?" she asked.

"I don't know and I honestly don't care because you're okay," I breathed. "Cars can be replaced. You can't."

"My head is killing me," she said as she reached her hand up to her head.

"You have a pretty nasty concussion, baby. You've been asleep for nearly two days," I said sadly. "I've been praying every day for you to wake up. I've missed you so much."

There was a soft knock on the door. Carlisle poked his head in. "Ah, you're awake. You've had us extremely worried, Bella. How are you feeling?" he asked as he walked to Bella's side.

"Tired. Nauseous. My head hurts. It hurts to breathe," she replied.

"Well, I'm not sure what my son told you but you have a serious concussion. We were worried that you might have done some damage to your brain. You might have some residual side effects, like sensitivity to light, sound, and headaches for the next few months. It's something that needs to be monitored. You also fractured a few ribs in the crash. Other than that, you were pretty lucky," Carlisle explained.

"What happened to Jacob?" she asked.

"He was killed on impact. It was a head on collision and he didn't stand a chance," Carlisle said sadly.

"When can she get out of here?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"I want to keep her for another night. However, if all goes well tonight, you can head back home tomorrow," Carlisle responded with a warm smile. "I'm glad you're awake, Bella."

"Thank you, Carlisle," she said quietly. "Can I get something to eat?"

"Of course, let me get you a menu," he said as he dashed off to the nurse's station. He returned momentarily with a menu in his hands. She took it and looked it over. She made her selections and Carlisle informed the nurses. "Is there anything else?"

"I feel so embarrassed but I need to go to the bathroom," she said, a blush creeping over her cheeks.

"Let me get a nurse and she can help you," Carlisle said with a professional smile. He returned with an older woman who helped Bella to the bathroom. She was guided back to the bed and she got under the covers. She looked at me and frowned.

"I can't see much, Edward, but you look like shit," she admonished.

"I hate to burst your bubble but neither do you," I teased.

"I was in a car accident. You were not," she reasoned.

"I've been panicking that you would never wake up. It's taken its toll on me," I said sadly. "I don't think I could live without you, baby. I was afraid I lost you."

Bella's eyes filled with tears. "I'm so sorry, Edward. I didn't realize."

"Bella, don't you feel guilty. You're okay and that's all that matters to me. I love you so much," I said as I sat down on the corner of her bed. She sat up and grimaced. She put her arms around my neck and cried into my shoulder. I gingerly put my arms around her tiny body and held her to me, thankful that she would be alright.

"Edward?"

"Yes, love?" I responded.

"You so need to shower. The smell of smoke is making me nauseous," she said against my neck. "It's fucking with your natural scent."

"Got it, baby. I'll shower when you're eating," I replied, pulling away. "I'm sorry. I don't know what prompted me to have the cigarette."

"Stupidity?" she teased.

"That's it. Let me call Emmett so he can bring me a change of clothes and he could bring your dad," I said.

"My dad's here?" Bella asked.

"Yeah. He flew in and Emmett picked him up this morning. He's been worried about you," I said. "We've all been worried about you."

"Oh."

I pulled out my phone and called Emmett. I told him that Bella was awake and would like to see Charlie. I also asked him to bring some clothes for her and for me. He said he would be at the hospital in an hour. I sat back down in the chair next to Bella's bed. Bella drifted off to sleep as I waited for Emmett and Charlie to return. I idly traced patterns on her hand. Emmett and Charlie walked in and Bella's eyes opened up. She gave both of them a sleepy grin. Emmett handed me a bag with my clothes and I dashed into the shower to wash off the stench of smoke from my body.

After my shower, I put on my deodorant and sprayed some cologne that Emmett had put into my bag and I quickly got dressed into the jeans and hoodie that Emmett brought me. I walked out of the bathroom and put the bag on the cot in the room. Bella beckoned me to her and she lifted her arms for a hug. I gave it to her gently and she inhaled my neck. "Much better."



## La Cantante

"I'm glad you approve," I chuckled.

Emmett and Charlie stayed until the end of visiting hours. I offered Charlie the cot to stay with Bella, but he refused when he saw Bella's panicked look in her eyes. She wanted me to stay and I would not deny her anything. After they left, she complained that she was cold. I went into the duffel that Emmett brought and found a pair of flannel pajama bottoms. I helped her out of the bed and into the pajamas. I also put some socks onto her feet. "Edward?"

"Yeah, baby?" I replied.

"Can you sleep with me?" she asked quietly.

"Baby, I'm not sure. The bed is small and I don't want to hurt you," I said sadly.

"Please? Can you at least lay with me until I fall asleep?" Bella pleaded.

"Okay," I replied. She scooted over and I lay down on my side, facing her. She wrapped her arm around my waist and cuddled against me.

"I'm sorry, Edward," she mumbled against my chest.

"Why are you apologizing?" I asked.

"I don't know but I feel like I should," she responded.

"Don't. Everything is fine. Jacob is gone. He can never hurt you again," I whispered in her hair. I felt Bella yawn. "Go to sleep, Bella. You need to rest."

"I love you, Edward. Thank you for being here with me," she said sleepily.

"There's nowhere else that I want to be, baby," I comforted. "I love you, so much, Bella."

Bella's breath evened out and she grew heavy on my chest. I held onto her as long as I could. When the nurse came into check on her, she gave me the stink

## La Cantante

eye and I eased myself out of her bed. I eventually ended up on the cot and fell into a fitful sleep. I was so happy that Bella had woken up and that the ordeal with Jacob was finally over. I was happy that we could move forward with our lives and not dwell on the past. I knew that our road would be bumpy, but we would travel it together, guiding each other with our love. It was a road that I was happy to move along, as long as I had Bella by my side.

**A/N: This chapter was TOUGH to write. I was crying. I felt so bad for Edward. However, the asshat is gone. Bella is awake and some light fluffiness will be coming in the next few chapters. Leave some love, please :)**

# Recovery

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 61: Recovery

### BPOV

"Hey Edward?" I called.

"Yeah, baby?" he responded.

"I'm going to run to Super Target to pick up some whipped cream and other things. Do you want anything?" I asked.

"Why do we need whipped cream, Bella?" Edward laughed.

"You'll see. Later," I giggled.

"Fuck me," he breathed.

"That's the plan, handsome," I said as I kissed his lips. "I'll be back in an hour or so. Love you, so much."

"Love you, more, beautiful. Hurry back to me," he said as he puckered his lips for another kiss. I leaned down and brushed my lips against his, nibbling on his bottom lip, eliciting a growl from him. "I'll be back soon. Study hard."

"Tease," he grumbled.

"Not if I intend to follow through," I said as I picked my keys. "Bye, baby."

## La Cantante

"Bye, Bella."

I walked down the hall to the elevator and slid into Edward's Volvo. As much as I tease him about it, it's a sweet car. Nice ride, awesome sound system and best of all, smells like him. I eased Edward's car out of the parking spot and begin my trek to Super Target. Ever since the limo blowjob with the beer, I've been wanting to experiment with food. I'm certain Edward would not object these experiments. We have a healthy sex life, but it doesn't hurt to mix it up a bit. I also talked with Alice and Rose and we decided to go to a local sex shop for some other goodies to enhance our erotic explorations. I couldn't wait.

I pulled into the parking lot of Super Target and got out. It had started snowing on my way there and I was not looking forward to driving back to our apartment. I hate driving in the snow. It was something I could never get the hang of. Edward's car was very safe and had four-wheel drive, but the driver is what ultimately handles the car. I didn't handle snow driving well, at all!

My phone started vibrating in my pocket as I was picking up the whipped cream, strawberries and chocolate sauce.

*An Edward sundae. Yum!*

"Hello?"

"Isabelly! I have a huge favor to ask of you," Emmett boomed over the phone. I pulled the cell phone away from my ear to save my hearing.

"I'll do it if you don't yell into the phone, Em," I laughed.

"I need your help in getting Rose her Valentine's Day present," Emmett asked quietly.

"Sure thing, Brother Bear. What are you thinking?" I asked.

"That's the thing. I have no flipping clue," he floundered.

## La Cantante

"Hmmm...let me think and we'll go shopping this weekend, okay?" I suggested.

"You're the best, Isabelly. What are you doing?"

"I'm at Super Target, picking up some stuff for the apartment," I answered.

"Like what?"

"Toilet paper, laundry detergent, dishwashing detergent," I lied. If he only knew what I was getting. Stuff to make my fiancé squirm is more appropriate.

"Awww, my Isabelly is growing up. So domestic," he sniffled.

"Shut it, Em. I've been taking care of you and Charlie for many years now. I've been domestic since I came out of the womb," I giggled.

"Whatever, Isabelly," he scoffed.

I had finished paying the cashier and was walking out of the store as we were talking. "I'm going to get going, Em. It's really snowing and I hate to drive in this shit," I grumbled. I pulled my keys from pocket and walked to the driver's side of the car.

"Hello, Bella," I heard.

I yelped and dropped the phone, ending the call with Emmett. I quickly picked it up and looked at a fuming Jacob. I turned on my heel and began running back to the store. Jacob quickly overcame me. He wrapped his beefy arms around me and I immediately became dead weight. I stomped on his foot and managed to get away again. He caught me and threw me over his shoulder. He slammed me into the backseat of Edward's car and sped out of the parking lot. I buckled my seat belt as he was driving erratically. I started crying.

"Jacob, what do you want?" I bawled.

## La Cantante

"You," he replied honestly. He looked at me through the rear view mirror. His eyes were filled with hatred and lust. I needed to diffuse the situation. I just didn't know how.

"I'm not yours, Jacob. You need to understand that," I whispered.

"No! You need to understand that you will always be mine, Bella. Not his," Jacob sneered.

*Obviously, that didn't work. Fuck.*

The car swerved on an icy patch of the road. Jacob managed to right the car, but he was still driving like a maniac. The speedometer read over 70 mph. I was praying that we wouldn't crash.

"Where are you taking me?" I asked, trying a new tactic.

"I don't know yet," Jacob said. "Just sit back there and shut up."

Jacob began pounding on the steering wheel. His whole body tensed up and I could see the muscles ripple through his shirt. I started crying again, wishing he would just let me go. I was not his possession. I was never his.

"Will you fucking shut up? All your crying will do nothing," he yelled. I shrank back in my seat, trying to distance myself from his anger.

Then it all happened in slow motion. Over his shoulder, I saw a large truck cross over the median of the highway. Jacob obviously hadn't seen it. "Jacob! Look out!" I screamed as I pointed toward the window. Jacob jerked his head and body around and attempted to move the Volvo out of the way of the truck. The Volvo wouldn't respond and we were hit head on.

I felt a pain on my left side of my body. I also felt a searing white hot jolt on the left side of my face. I screamed and barely understood what was happening. The car rolled and eventually came to a halt. I looked around and saw Jacob. His head was nearly removed from his body. His eyes were open and they were

## La Cantante

lifeless. I tried to move, but I was pinned in the backseat. I could move all of my limbs, but my head was pounding. I blinked my eyes, but I could feel darkness creep around the edges. I tried to keep my eyes open, but they kept closing. I lost the battle and I eventually drifted out of consciousness.

xx LC xx

My thought were foggy. I could vaguely recollect being moved from the car. They placed me on a stretcher and they were shouting about my breathing. I felt my head tip back and a cold metal instrument was shoved inside. Something was shoved into my throat and I could feel air being forced into my lungs. It hurt. With each breath, there was an intense pain that rippled across my chest. However, I was powerless to move. I was afraid to move. If I moved, it hurt. I didn't want to hurt. I needed my Edward. He'd make me feel better.

The stretcher moved from the cold and I was placed into a warm, sterile place. However, I was still shaking, trembling from the shock I had just endured. I had no idea if I was unconscious for a few moments or a few hours. It concerned me.

I was being poked and prodded. I could faintly hear a beeping sound. It was quite annoying. I felt a hard rock on my chest and I reacted. I tried to moan, but that was thwarted because of the tube down my throat. I, however, reacted with my body. I moved my arms and tried to curl up.

"...reacts to painful stimuli," a muddy voice declared.

*No shit, Sherlock. You just rubbed on my chest with a rock. How else am I going to react? Idiot.*

I heard more voices. They were more panicked. I recognized a few of the voices. One of them was Emmett. If Emmett was here, then he had to bring Edward. Please let Edward be here!

"I'm her brother and this is her husband. Is she alright?" Emmett asked.

## La Cantante

*Husband? When did I get married? I know I'm engaged, but not married.*

"She was lucky. She had her seatbelt on and was on the opposite side of the vehicle when it was hit. The driver was not so fortunate," the EMT replied. "You can come in. We're heading to the hospital in a few moments."

I felt the ambulance dip slightly as another person climbed into the back of it. I smelled his wonderful scent of cologne, body wash and Edward. I immediately relaxed. My love was near. I could hear sniffing and I knew he was crying.

*Don't cry, Edward. I'm fine. Please, baby.*

"Hey, baby. I'm here. I'm never leaving your side until I see your beautiful brown eyes. I need you to come back to me, Bella. I thought I lost you. I need you. I can't survive without you," he cried.

My heart broke in my chest. I willed my eyes to open but they wouldn't. I wanted to reach out and touch him, but my body wouldn't respond. Edward picked up my hand gingerly and he gently caressed my cheeks. His touches calmed me and the jolt that I associate with Edward reminded me that I was alive. I needed to see him. I wanted my eyes to crack open but they wouldn't.

*Mother fucker! Come on!*

"We're ready to go. Do you want to ride with us, sir?" the EMT asked.

I need him to stay with me. He better ride with us. Please! I beg you.

"Can I?" Edward asked. I'm assuming the EMT nodded as Edward didn't move. He held onto my hand tighter. I felt him shuffle next to me. A muffled tone came through my ears.

"Dad? Bella has been in accident. Can you meet us at the emergency room?" Edward sobbed.

Carlisle responded but I couldn't understand him.



## La Cantante

"I don't know, Dad. Please meet us there," he sobbed. He stroked my hand and I could feel his tears on my skin. Carlisle barked something into the phone but again I couldn't understand him. "I love you too, Dad." Edward released my hand and he moved next to me. "Please wake up, beautiful."

*I'm trying, Edward. I need to see you.*

The doors of the ambulance slammed shut and I felt another body enter the back of the vehicle. The sirens started wailing and we began moving. Edward ran his fingers through my hair, whimpering as he did so. He leaned down and kissed my temple and it hurt. I felt more tears on my cheeks. I tried to open my eyes, but couldn't. It hurt too much. It hurt to breathe, even with the tube down my throat. It hurt to think. Edward was taking deep breaths next to me, trying to calm himself. I could hear him praying. The last thing I remembered before slipping back into a deeper state of unconsciousness was Edward telling me he loved me.

*I love you, too, Edward.*

xx LC xx

"Bella?" I heard. "Bella, open your eyes for me. It's Carlisle. Come on, sweetheart," he pleaded.

I couldn't do it. I felt colder, even though I was in a warmer place. I couldn't figure it out. Why can't I open my eyes?

"Take her CT. We need to take a look inside her head. I'm concerned with her lack of consciousness. She should have regained some level of consciousness," Carlisle said.

"Yes, Dr. Cullen," a young nurse responded.

"Take good care of her Nessie," he said sadly.

"I will, sir," Nessie replied quietly.

## La Cantante

I was rolled to a colder room where I heard loud whirring sounds. I was lifted from the gurney and placed in a machine. I heard loud clicks and a motor running. I didn't know where I was and I began to panic. I heard Nessie call Carlisle.

"Dr. Cullen? The patient is getting agitated. Almost panicking," she said.  
"Okay, sir."

Nessie walked to me and I felt warmth spread through my veins. "This should calm you down, Bella. You're in good hands," she said quietly. "You have a bunch of people in the waiting room worried about you. They all love you. You're going to be okay."

I wanted to nod or do something to acknowledge her. However, my body still would not cooperate with me. The longer I stayed on the cold, hard table, the more tired I felt. My body and mind were beginning to relax. I needed to stay alert, but it was fading and fading fast.

I faintly remembered being moved from the cold table back to the gurney. I didn't remember having the breathing tube removed from my throat. I do remember hearing Carlisle's voice the next time I was aware. My mouth was open and Carlisle was mumbling about possible damage to my vocal cords from the breathing tube.

"Bella? Can you hear me?" Carlisle asked quietly. He ran his hand across my cheek, similar to what Edward does. "We're all fighting for you, Bella. You're okay. I know you're in there. I love you. Esme loves you. Alice loves you. Emmett loves you. Jasper loves you. Rose loves you. Most importantly, Edward, my son loves you and he needs you."

I wanted to scream at my body's unwillingness to cooperate. I wanted to open my eyes and say that I loved everyone back. I couldn't. I wanted to, but couldn't.

"I'm going to talk to your family and we'll send them in, Bella," Carlisle whispered as he stroked my head. I heard the door open and then close. I lay,

## La Cantante

listening to the annoying beep of my heart monitor. I lay, wanting to move, but unable to do so.

*Fuck my life.*

"Isabelly? It's Emmett," my brother said quietly. He rolled something next to me and heard him sit down. "I don't know if you can hear me. I feel stupid if I'm just talking to myself right now, but I need to talk to you, baby sister. Carlisle says you're going to be okay. I'm so happy about that. However, I'm worried about Edward. He's a mess. He needs you, Isabelly. If you don't wake up, I don't think he'll make it. My heart breaks to see him so sad and upset. His eyes are dead. I know it's a lot of pressure on you, but you need to know. I love you, Isabelly. Please wake up. If not for me, wake up for Edward. He needs you more than you can imagine." Emmett kissed my forehead and I felt his tears on my cheeks. He picked up my hand and I heard him quietly sob. "Get better soon, Isabelly. I love you, baby sister."

Emmett got up and kissed my forehead again before he left. I heard the door whoosh open and Emmett's sobs. They were muffled by someone or something and I didn't know who or what it was. The door opened again and I felt his presence.

*Edward. I'm here, baby.*

He moved slowly into the room and he sat down next to me. "Hey baby," he said, his voice thick with emotion. He ran his fingers along my cheek. It ignited my skin. I wanted to reach up and cup his hand in mine. Again, my body refused to move.

*God damn it!*

"I miss you. So fucking much. I need you to wake up. I need to see your beautiful brown eyes. I need to hear your beautiful voice, your wonderful laugh, and your snarky comments. Bella, I can't live without you. Please, wake up. I love you so much. I need you," he cried.

## La Cantante

I felt the tears build behind my eyes. I'm certain a few tears slipped down my cheeks. I'm not sure if Edward saw my reaction. Carlisle entered the room, "Edward, it's time to move her. I've arranged for you to stay with her. There's a cot in her room. I'm also not going home tonight. I want to monitor her condition."

"Dad, I appreciate you being here. I know that you are not an emergency room doctor, but I don't know what I would have done if you weren't here," Edward whispered as he brushed a piece of hair off my face.

"I may not be an emergency room doctor, but I'm a doctor. It's my duty to ensure the health of my patients and Bella is my patient," he said as he stood next to me. "She's going to be fine. Her EEG looks good. I watched it as you were talking to her. She recognizes your voice. That's a good thing."

"I just need her to wake up," Edward murmured.

"Her brain took a heavy beating and her sleeping is the best thing for it. Her body needs to heal. She'll wake up when she's ready. However, I have a job for you. You need to call your professors and inform them of the accident. I know that that's the last thing on your mind, but it'll focus your mind elsewhere," Carlisle admonished. "I'll stay with Bella until she's transferred."

*Crap. School. How am I going to make up all my classes?*

Before I could obsess over school, I felt some more warmth through my veins. My mind began to cloud up and I soon fell back into the blackness.

xx LC xx

"...That's great! Now, can you get her to wake up? Can you turn back time and prevent this from happening? Can you make her be okay?" Edward sobbed.

I heard a shuffle and my father soothed Edward. "It's okay, son. Let it out. We're here for you. Bella loves you. She's going to be okay. She's too stubborn not to be."

*Daddy. Please make Edward feel better. I can't so please help him!*

I heard shuffling and strained whispers. I also could hear Edward crying. My heart was shattering at his pain. I wanted to much to wake up for him, but I still couldn't.

I faintly recollected Edward mumbling something before he abruptly left the room. Emmett sat next to me and I could sense my father near me. "Hey, Isabelly. How are you doing? As you can probably hear, things are not so hot right now. Edward is falling apart at the seams. He's so cool usually. I've never seen him this discombobulated. Wake up soon. He's going to suffer a nervous breakdown if you don't," Emmet said sadly. "Dad's here and he wants to talk to you. I love you, baby sister. I have to head back to Emerson."

Emmett shuffled out of the room and my dad sat near me. He picked up my hand. He gently rubbed soothing circles on the back of it. "Baby girl. My sweet baby girl. What did Jake do to you?" My dad began sniffing and I wanted to comfort him.

"Well, I know that I can't changed what happened. So, I'll tell you some good news. I've started radiation treatments for my lung cancer. I only have to go through four of them. The chemotherapy managed to kill all of my cancer, baby girl. I'm on the road to recovery. I have some other news, too, baby girl. You know how I told you about Sue? Well, we're moving in together. She's going to move into the house. It's going to happen sometime over the summer. No talk of marriage, yet. I'm not ready to take that leap again. Perhaps soon. Shit, Bella, I wish I could tell all of this to you while you are awake. Emmett is right about Edward though. He's crumbling. I love him like a son and it pains me to see him in such anguish. I know you are going to be alright. Carlisle, Edward's dad, said that you are showing signs of improvement. I have to believe him. I love you, so much, baby girl," Charlie whispered. He leaned in and kissed my cheek. I was soothed by his aftershave and the tickle of his mustache.

"Time for her medication," came a quiet voice. The warmth again spread through my veins and I slipped away.

xx LC xx

For the first time in awhile, my eyes fluttered open. It was twilight. The room was sort of dark, but not so much. I could see a faint outline of someone leaning on my bed. I tentatively reached my hand up and brushed the person. Their hair was so soft. He moaned and he turned his head. It was Edward. His face was laying on his arms on my bed. In one hand was his glasses and his other hand was in a fist. I ran my fingers through his hair, massaging his scalp.

"Edward?" I croaked.

He buried his face into his arms and his breath evened out. He was dead to the world. I closed my eyes and took a few breaths myself. It still hurt to breathe deeply, but not too much. I'm assuming that it was because of the pain medication that they kept giving me. I placed my hand back in Edward's hair, letting his presence calm me. I drifted back asleep for a few moments and then I tried to rouse him again. I used a different tactic. I tugged on the silken strands of Edward's hair. He turned his face and his eyes slowly opened. "Bella?"

I opened my eyes and smiled at him weakly. "Edward? What happened?"

"You're awake! Oh, thank God, you're awake," he said as tears spilled down his cheeks. He leaned forward and he kissed my forehead. I inhaled deeply but was met with the stench of cigarettes. I wrinkled my nose.

"Have you been smoking?" I snapped.

"Um, yeah. Just one, though. I needed to focus my mind on something else. Never again, baby," he apologized.

I blinked a few times, trying to focus my vision. "What happened, Edward? Tell me."

"What do you remember?"

## La Cantante

"Going to the store and that's it," I answered. I remembered the car and the pain that Edward was in but how I got here was fuzzy.

"You went to Super Target because you wanted whipped cream. Jacob apparently followed you there and kidnapped you. You were in a car accident because of the snow. Jacob was killed instantly," Edward explained as he laced his fingers with mine.

*Jacob. His lifeless body. His dead eyes.*

"Oh. What happened to the car?" I asked dumbly.

"I don't know and I don't care, honestly. Cars can be replaced. You can't," Edward said fervently.

I pondered his words and I brought my hand to my head. "My head is killing me," I said weakly.

"You have a pretty nasty concussion, baby. You've been asleep for nearly two days. I've been praying everyday for you to wake up. I've missed you so much," Edward said as tears gathered in his beautiful green eyes. My own eyes filled with tears for the pain I caused him. We heard a knock on the door and someone poked their head in.

"Ah, you're awake. You've had us extremely worried, Bella. How are you feeling?" Carlisle asked. I saw his form move toward me but I couldn't make out anything else.

"Tired. Nauseous. My head hurts. It hurts to breath," I answered with a grimace.

"Well, I'm not sure what my son told you but you have a serious concussion. We were worried that you might have done some damage to your brain. You might have some residual side effects, like sensitivity to light, sound, and headaches for the next few months. It's something that needs to be monitored. You also fractured a few ribs in the crash. Other than that, you were pretty

## La Cantante

lucky," Carlisle explained.

"What happened to Jacob?" I asked. I needed to know if he was still alive or he did, indeed, die in the crash.

"He was killed on impact. It was a head on collision and he didn't stand a chance," Carlisle said sadly.

*He's dead. It's really over? I can live my life?*

"When can she get out of here?" Edward asked.

"I want to keep her for another night. However, if all goes well tonight, you can head back home tomorrow," Carlisle responded with a warm smile. "I'm glad you're awake, Bella."

"Thank you, Carlisle. Can I get something to eat?" I asked.

"Of course, let me get you a menu," he said as he dashed off to the nurse's station. He returned momentarily with a menu in his hands. I looked over the menu and chose a chicken sandwich with fries. He jotted that down and said he would inform the nurse that I needed some food. "Is there anything else?"

"I feel embarrassed, but I need to go to the bathroom," I said, as my cheeks heated up. I didn't feel steady enough on my feet and I didn't want Edward helping me. There are some things that fiancés are not supposed to do.

"Let me get a nurse and she can help you," Carlisle said with a smile. He came back with an older woman who reminded me of my grandmother and she helped me out of bed. I tentatively put weight on my feet. My left knee felt unstable and my ankles were swollen but I was able to walk, sort of. I went to the bathroom with her assistance and shuffled back into bed, where she tucked me under the covers. After I settled back into the bed, I finally had an opportunity to look at Edward. His hair was a total mess. He had dark circles under his eyes in addition to them being very puffy. He had a several-day-old beard growing across his cheeks and he looked thinner.



## La Cantante

"I can't see much, Edward, but you look like shit," I chastised.

"I hate to burst your bubble, but neither do you," he teased. I can only imagine what I looked like. I saw a glimpse of myself in the bathroom. My hair was filthy and caked with blood. My left side of my face was bruised tremendously and it looked like I had a few stitches near my temple.

"I was in a car accident. You were not," I clarified. I'm allowed to look like shit. I was in a crushed vehicle.

"I've been panicking that you would never wake up. It's taken its toll on me," Edward said sadly. "I don't think I could live without you, baby. I was afraid I lost you."

My eyes filled with tears and they spilled onto my cheeks. "I'm sorry, Edward. I didn't realize."

"Bella, don't you feel guilty. You're okay and that's all that matters to me. I love you so much," Edward said softly as he sat on the edge of the bed. I gently sat up and I felt a searing pain shoot across my chest. I scowled in pain. I hesitantly put my arms around his neck and cried into his shoulder. Edward tenderly put his arms around my broken body and held on to me. I felt his tears against my hospital gown. However, I needed to pull away.

"Edward?" I said as I sat back.

"Yes, love?"

"You really need to shower. The smell of smoke is making me nauseous. It's fucking with your natural scent," I said, scrunching my nose.

"Got it, baby," Edward said as he moved to the seat next to my bed. "I'll shower while you're eating. I'm sorry. I don't know what prompted me to have a cigarette."

"Stupidity?"

## La Cantante

"That's it," he laughed. "Let me call Emmett so he can bring me a change of clothes and he could bring your dad."

"My dad's here?"

"Yeah. He flew in and Emmett picked him up this morning. He's been worried about you," Edward said. "We've all been worried about you."

"Oh."

Edward pulled out his phone and called Emmett. He spoke to my brother, asking him to bring a bag of clothes for the both of us. He also asked if he could bring Charlie. He hung up the phone after a few moments, saying they would be here in an hour or so. I nodded and leaned back against the pillow. My eyes drifted shut and I snoozed until Emmett and Charlie came into the room. I smiled at both of them. Emmett gave me my glasses and I slipped them on my face. It felt good to see. Edward took the bag of clothes and snuck into the shower. Emmett and Charlie turned on the television and watched some sports show. I just relaxed as they sat with me. My food was brought and I picked at it. I ate what I could and gave the rest to Emmett. Edward came out of the shower when I finished my dinner. I beckoned him to come to me and I raised my arms for a hug. He gingerly put his arms around me and I inhaled his neck. Cologne, body wash and Edward. Perfect. "Much better," I breathed against his skin.

"I'm glad you approve," Edward laughed.

Charlie and Emmett stayed until the end of visiting hours. Edward offered the cot to Charlie to have him stay with me but I was having a minor panic attack. Charlie recognized this and he refused it. He and Emmett left after saying goodbye. I needed Edward to stay. He was my rock. My support. My everything. I shivered and complained that it was freezing in the room. Edward got out a pair of flannel pajama bottoms and helped me into them. He also put a pair of woolen socks on my feet. "Edward?"

"Yeah, baby?" he replied.

## La Cantante

"Can you sleep with me?" I asked reluctantly.

"Baby, I'm not sure. The bed is small and I don't want to hurt you," he said despondently.

"Please? Can you at least lay with me until I fall asleep?" I begged.

"Okay," he responded with a smile. I moved over and he lay down on his side, facing me. I wrapped my arm around him and cuddled against his chest.

"I'm sorry, Edward."

"Why are you apologizing?" he admonished.

"I don't know but I feel like I should," I murmured.

"Don't. Everything is fine. Jacob is gone. He can never hurt you again," Edward whispered in my hair. I yawned. "Go to sleep, Bella. You need to rest."

"I love you, Edward. Thank you for being here with me," I mumbled.

"There's nowhere else that I want to be, baby," Edward comforted. "I love you, so much, Bella."

My eyes drifted closed and I fell asleep quickly. I felt Edward get up and leave the bed when the nurse came into check on me. She administered my pain medication and I fell into a deeper sleep.

xx LC xx

I woke up early the next morning. I reached for my glasses from the bedside table. Edward was contorted on the chair next to me. He had his fingers laced together with mine. His face was in pain as his 6'2" body was scrunched into a small chair. Even in looks of pain, he was handsome. His mouth was slightly open, his brow furrowed and the stubble on his chin had now grown out to an almost full beard.

"Edward?" I asked.

"Hmm?" he mumbled, stretching his body. "What, beautiful?" he asked sleepily, opening his jade eyes.

"Can you help me up? I still don't feel steady on my feet and I need to go the bathroom," I said, embarrassed.

"Sure, love," he said as he stood up. He leaned back and I heard a few bones crack and I grimaced. "It's nothing, Bella. Sleeping on the cot and this oh-so-comfortable chair have not been kind to the knots in my back. I'll be fine."

I swung my feet over the side of the bed and Edward held out his hands to me. I tentatively reached for them and I started to stand up. Edward moved his hands to my forearms, supporting my weight. I finally stood up and we began moving slowly to the bathroom in the room. "Will you be okay?" Edward asked.

"I think so. Just stay close by in case I fall," I said as I moved into the bathroom. I closed the door and took care of business. I was shaky on my feet, but I was certain it was because of lack of food and lack of use. I found a toothbrush on the sink and I brushed my teeth. I felt somewhat human after I did that. I looked up in the mirror and I was aghast at what I saw. I was a mess. Complete mess. My hair was plastered to my head and caked with blood. The left side of my face was one big bruise. My stomach churned and I moved as quickly as I could to the bathroom and heaved whatever I had in my stomach into toilet. I sunk to my knees and began crying, sobbing hysterically. Edward burst through the door.

"Bella? Bella? What's wrong, love?" he asked, panicked.

Not be able to articulate my thoughts, I ran my hands through my disgusting hair and pointed to my face. I bawled harder, moving away from Edward. I didn't want him to see me like this.

## La Cantante

"Baby, you're fine. You'll feel better after you've taken a shower. Do you want me to get a nurse to help you?" he asked.

I shook my head no and I curled up as best I could. I heard faint shuffling in the background and Edward was speaking to somebody. I felt another person enter the bathroom.

"Bella?" Carlisle asked. "Are you in pain?"

I took a few deep breaths, shuddering with each one. "A little. However, I look horrible," I cried.

"Bella, I know what you saw in the mirror is not what you expected. You will feel better after you have cleaned up and showered. Esme is here and she wants to help you. Can she come in?" Carlisle asked gently, rubbing soothing circles on my back.

I nodded, not trusting my voice.

"It'll be okay, Bella. Come on, let me help you up," Carlisle said as he held out his hands to me. I grasped them and he gently heaved me from the floor. He wrapped his arms around me and held me to his chest, swaying us.

Esme walked in with an armful of clothes, towels, shampoo and soap. She ran her fingers through my hair and walked to the shower and turned it on. Carlisle pressed a kiss to my forehead and he slipped out of the bathroom, shutting the door behind him. Esme flushed the toilet and closed the seat. She pushed me to sit on it and she removed my socks, pants and untied the hospital gown. I still had my IV in my arm, so she fished the IV bag through the gown before removing it. I slowly eased down my underwear and Esme wrapped her arm around me. She helped me into the tiny shower stall. I leaned against the fiberglass wall and let the water pour down my sore and broken body. It felt good.

Esme hummed quietly as she washed me with a soft washcloth. I was thankful for her help but also thankful for her not wanting to talk as she washed me.

## La Cantante

Tears fell down my cheeks, as I thought of her act of love and kindness. It also made me bitter toward my own mother. Never had she shown me the love that I had felt from the Cullens. My mom was nice, but selfish. It was always about her. Even when I was sick with the chicken pox and had an insanely high fever, she never helped me in the shower or cared for me like Esme was now. I was six.

Esme pushed me back so the water cascaded through my hair. It stung but at the same time it felt good. I yelped at the feelings. She lathered up the shampoo and gently scrubbed my hair. We rinsed my hair and my body and I started trembling. Esme turned off the shower and wrapped me in a huge towel. She sat me back on the toilet and used another towel to dry my hair. "Feel better?"

"A little bit. Thank you, Esme," I muttered.

"Don't thank me, sweetheart. I'm just taking care of my own," she said as she caressed my cheek. "I may not have given birth to you, but I consider you to be a daughter. I love you, Bella. We all love you."

I sobbed and threw my arms around Esme's waist. She held onto me and let me cry. She ran her fingers through my hair, idly removing the tangles. "Come on, dear, you must be getting cold. I don't want you to get sick on top of what already happened to you." Esme handed me the pile of clothes and I found a pair of underwear and a sports bra. I slipped the underwear on underneath the towel. I put the straps of the sports bra over my shoulders and tried to clasp it. I couldn't and Esme hooked the bra for me. I then reached for a pair of soft, velour track pants in a bright purple color and pulled them up my sore legs. Esme called a nurse who removed my IV. Then, Esme helped put a long sleeved white thermal t-shirt over my head and handed me the matching velour hoodie. I reached for a brush, but Esme snatched it before I could get it. She carefully brushed my hair and let it hang down my shoulders. She dashed out of the bathroom and returned with a blow dryer. She removed the dampness of my hair with the towel and finished drying it with the blow dryer. I put on some deodorant and Esme sprayed some body spray over my head.

"Feel human, again?" Esme teased.

## La Cantante

I gave a smile and nodded. She reached out her hands and helped me up. She put her arm around my waist and led me back to hospital room and onto bed. The shower, which had taken a grand total of fifteen minutes, had drained me. When I settled back into the bed, I noticed that Carlisle was talking to Charlie and Edward was sitting in the chair next to the bed. I smiled at Edward and he returned it with his signature crooked smirk. I waited until their conversation was done before I piped up.

"When can I go home?" I asked quietly.

"I'm having discharge papers being drawn up now, Bella. You should be able to leave late this morning," Carlisle said with a grin. He darted out of the room.

"How are we getting home?" I asked. "Your car was totaled."

"Esme is letting me use her Land Rover until I can purchase a new one," Edward said. "I want you to come with me to choose the car I'm going to buy, since we'll be sharing it. Charlie brought over the mail when he came this morning with Emmett and I have the insurance claim. We'll get the cost of what my Volvo was at the time of the crash. We'll use that money, in addition some trust fund money to purchase the car."

"Esme, we can't take your car," I said, my heart pounding.

"Bella, it's not a big deal. We have six cars in our family. I'll just use the Mercedes," she said soothingly.

Edward held my hand and gave me a smile. I returned his grin weakly and picked up his hand. I looked at our hands together and I noticed something was missing. "Edward? Where are my rings?"

"They had to remove them in the trauma room," Edward said as he reached around his neck. He pulled out my Cullen crest from his hoodie and the rings were strung onto the chain of the pendant. "I put them onto the necklace my parents gave you and wore it myself. Here, let me give you back your jewelry." He removed the necklace and shook the rings off the chain. I went to reach for

## La Cantante

the rings, but Edward pulled his hand away with a smirk. He put my necklace on first, gently lifting my hair. He then reverently put my rings back on their appropriate fingers. He kissed my left hand after he put my engagement ring back onto my finger.

"Where's Emmett?" I asked.

"He's on his way to the airport. Renee flew in today with Phil. He's picking them up," Charlie explained.

I nodded and settled back onto my tiny hospital bed, playing with Edward's fingers. He gently ran his fingers along my palm, calming me.

"Do you want anything to eat, Bella? I brought some muffins from home," Esme said kindly.

"That sounds good. I don't think my stomach can handle much else," I replied. Esme took out a muffin from a basket near the window. She put it on a paper plate and poured some tea from a thermos. She placed them onto the table that slid over the hospital bed and sat back down. I nibbled on the muffin and sipped the tea slowly, not wanting to sprint to the bathroom in a fit of nausea. "Aren't you guys going to eat?"

"I ate some breakfast at home," Esme said quietly. "The boys ate their muffins while you were showering."

"Oh, okay. I just feel weird eating with everyone watching me," I said uncomfortably. Edward grabbed the television remote and turned it on, surfing the channels until he got to Sports Center. Charlie relaxed and watched the sportscast.

We all sat in a relative silence, save for the quiet drone of the television until Carlisle returned with my discharge instructions. He told me to watch for extreme headaches and difficulties waking up. He informed Edward to call him if there was any change to my personality or if I became sluggish. He also told him to take me immediately to the hospital if I got a headache that would not



## La Cantante

dissipate with medication or my vision changed. A young, strawberry blonde nurse came in with a wheelchair.

"Hi, I'm Nessie and I'm springing you from this joint," she said cheerily. She looked at Edward and her eyes widened. "This is your fiancée?"

Edward blushed, "Yeah."

I looked at Edward, very confused. "What's going on, Edward?"

"Nessie was the nurse who gave me the cigarette and let me vent to her," Edward said quietly. "I'm sorry, baby."

"Oh, okay," I said quietly.

"He was very worried about you, Bella. I also worked with Dr. Cullen when you brought in," she said with a contrite look on her face. "Are you ready to go?"

I nodded and stood up from the bed. I got a head rush and wobbled on my feet. Edward's strong arms snaked around me and prevented me from falling on my face. "Take it slowly, beautiful." I leaned against him and gathered my bearings. Edward walked with me to the wheelchair and I sat down into it. Edward draped his jacket over my shoulders and Nessie wheeled me out of my room. Charlie and Edward both carried duffel bags and followed us with Esme. She handed her keys to Edward who ran ahead to pull the car around. We reached the exit of the hospital and a large silver SUV pulled up to the door. Edward hopped out and he opened the backseat of the car. He turned to me and I was frozen.

"Bella?" he asked.

I felt my chest constrict and my breathing become ragged. Flashes of the accident assaulted my mind. Jacob dead. Cold. Snow. Crushed Volvo.

"Bella? Baby, snap out of it," Edward said as he crouched in front of me.

## La Cantante

"I can't sit in the backseat," I whispered.

Edward looked into my eyes and realized why. "I'm sorry, beautiful. I didn't realize," he said quietly. "Let's get you settled into the front seat, okay?"

I nodded and slowly stood up from the wheelchair. Edward wrapped his arms around me and kissed my forehead. He lifted me to the passenger seat and closed the door. Charlie sat in the backseat of the car, gently rubbing my shoulders. Edward spoke briefly to Esme. He looked very upset. She wrapped her arms around him and soothed him. His shoulders were shaking and I knew he was crying. My own tears gathered in my eyes and spilled onto my cheeks. I closed my eyes and leaned back against the supple leather of front seat. Edward climbed into the car and shut the door. "Ready to go home?"

I nodded and turned my face away. I stared blankly out the window as we pulled away from the hospital. Esme waved and gave me a motherly smile. I waved back, halfheartedly. I closed my eyes and fell into a fitful sleep as we drove back to our apartment.

xx LC xx

Apparently, I slept harder than I realized. I woke up and I was in my bedroom. I got up and looked around the room. Nothing had changed in the two days that I was at the hospital. I put my feet onto the carpeting and moved slowly to the bathroom. I ran the water and gently washed my face. I picked up my toothbrush and brushed my teeth. I went to the bathroom and pulled my hair into a messy bun. I walked back to the bedroom and picked up my glasses from the bedside table. I opened our bedroom door and walked out to the living room, where I heard several voices.

"Isabelly!" Emmett boomed.

"Emmett, turn it down a notch," I said as I held my head. "Still recovering, you big oaf."

"Sorry," he said.

## La Cantante

"Isabella, I've been so worried, my baby girl," Renee said as she got up from the leather sofa. She held open her arms. I moved and let her hug me. It didn't feel the same as one of Esme's hugs, but it still felt nice. She pulled back and looked at me. "How are you feeling?"

"Tired. My head hurts. I'm also really sore," I said. "This may sound like a stupid question, but what day is it?"

"It's Friday, Isabelly," Emmett replied. "You had your accident on Wednesday."

I nodded and looked around. Emmett, Renee and Phil were the only ones in the apartment. "Where's Edward and Charlie?" I asked.

"They went to go get your prescriptions and some food. Edward was very hesitant to go, but Charlie pretty much dragged him out of the apartment by his ear. It was actually quite humorous," Emmett laughed.

"I'd love to see that," I giggled. "Ow. Remind me not to laugh. It hurts too much."

"What happened to you, Bella?" Phil asked.

"I don't remember much. However, Jacob followed me to the store and took me in the parking lot. He had hotwired Edward's car and threw me in the backseat. He wasn't paying attention to the road and a huge truck slammed into the car, killing him immediately. After that, I don't know anything," I said as I sat down on the couch, curling my legs under me.

I looked around the apartment and saw the flowers, balloons and stuffed animals from my hospital room scattered around the living room and kitchen. I smiled sadly at what they represented, but was grateful the kindness of the people who sent me them. "How long are you staying, Mom?" I asked.

"We're planning on staying through Monday. We're going to be at a hotel that's nearby. We don't want to impose," Renee said with a smile. "I need to make

sure my little girl is getting the best care."

I nodded and laid my head against Emmett's shoulder. He gently nudged me down onto his lap and I got comfortable. Phil turned on the television and we sat and watched some bad movie on Lifetime. I drifted off again but woke up when Edward and Charlie returned with some food and my medication. They had gotten some things from the grocery store, but picked up pizza for dinner tonight. Edward and Charlie put the pizza onto plates and distributed to everyone. Edward poked Emmett and he got up. Edward sat down next to me with a slice of pizza for me and a glass of water. I ate the pizza. However, when Edward got me a second piece, I shook my head no. I didn't have much of an appetite. I was also afraid of getting sick. Edward frowned, but didn't push me. After he was done with his dinner, I put my head into his lap and he played with my hair.

"Edward, this is a fabulous apartment," Renee gushed. "How are you able to afford such a place like this?"

"I've got some money saved up, Mrs. Dwyer," Edward said.

"What did I say about the 'Mrs. Dwyer' business?" she chastised.

"Sorry, Renee. I have some money saved up and was able to get a nicer apartment," Edward said. He shifted uncomfortably. He didn't like to talk about his trust fund and I hoped that Renee wouldn't press him.

"I hope Bella is helping out," Renee said.

"She's contributing," Edward said vaguely. "However, her focus right now is to get better."

"Okay, Edward. Phil and I are going to head to the hotel. I can imagine that you are very tired," she said, with a knowing look. "We'll be back tomorrow."

I slowly got up from Edward's lap. He helped me off the couch, wrapping his arm around my waist. "Thanks for coming, Mom. It wasn't necessary, though,"

I said as I hugged her.

"Nonsense. My little girl got hurt and I needed to make sure she was okay," she chided. "I love you, Bella. I'll see you tomorrow."

"Love you, too, Mom," I replied.

Renee moved to Edward and gave him a hug. He stiffly returned it, giving her a smile that didn't reach his eyes. "Thank you for helping, Renee. We'll see you tomorrow."

Renee, Phil, and Emmett left the apartment. I slumped against Edward and he picked me up, bridal style. "You need to sleep, beautiful. Good night, Charlie. Let me know if you need anything," Edward said as he carried me to the bedroom.

"I'm good, Edward. Thanks," he said as he closed the guest room door.

Edward put me onto our bed and pulled off my sneakers. "Edward, I can get ready for bed."

"I'm taking care of you, Bella. Deal with it," he said, quirked a brow over his glasses. He went to the dresser and took out my 'sick pajamas.' They were a pair of Garfield pajamas that had seen better days, but they always managed to make me feel better because they were so soft and comfortable. Edward unzipped my hoodie and pushed it off my shoulders. "Can you raise your arms?" he asked.

I nodded and did so. He took off the t-shirt from my body. He gasped when he saw the bruises along my ribs. I lowered my arms and snatched my pajama top from his hands. I pulled it over my shoulders, wiping the tears from my face. "Bella, don't cry, beautiful."

"I'm broken and you hate me," I cried.

## La Cantante

"You are not broken, just bruised. I certainly do not hate you. I hate what happened to you," he said as he crouched in front of me. "I hadn't seen your ribs and I was surprised by the bruises. I'm sorry if I made you feel uncomfortable. Do you want me to go while you change?"

I shook my head no and wrapped my arms around his neck. He returned my embrace, carefully putting his arms around my ribs. I pushed him away and stood up, pulling my pants down my legs. They were bruised as well. Edward looked at me as I put my pajama bottoms on, but didn't say anything. He gathered my clothes and put them into the hamper as I moved into the bed. Edward changed into some pajamas as well and crawled into bed. I lay down against his chest. "Thank you, Edward. For everything."

"I'd do anything for you, Bella. Absolutely anything," he said as he kissed my temple. I removed my glasses and handed them to Edward. He grabbed them and took off his own and put them both on the bedside table.

"What about school? How am I going to make up all that I missed?" I mumbled.

"I've talked to all of your professors and they are willing to work with you when you return to classes. I, unfortunately, need to go back on Monday. For the classes that we have together, I'll get the notes and assignments for you. Alice said she would get the notes for biology. You'll do fine. I promise you."

"I hope you're right, Edward."

"I love you, Bella. So much. I'm so happy that you're home. I know that your recovery will be slow going, but I'm here for you. Anything you need, I'll do it for you," he said as he gently cupped my chin. "Anything."

"Anything?" I asked.

"That's what I said."

"Can you kiss me, please? I need to feel you," I whispered.

## La Cantante

"You don't need to ask that, beautiful," he said as he leaned down and brushed his lips against mine. My breath hitched and tears flowed down my cheeks. Jacob had almost taken this away from me. I felt Edward's tears on my cheeks as well. Our reconnection had hit both of us. "Never again will we be apart, beautiful. I love you, baby."

"I love you more, Edward," I said against his lips.

"Highly unlikely. Sleep, beautiful. I can imagine you're tired. I know I am," he said, kissing my cheeks, my nose and ending with my lips.

I nodded and kissed his soft lips again, my face tickled by his beard. "Can I ask one more thing?"

"What baby?"

"Can you shave? Please? You look like Grizzly Adams," I teased.

"Your wish is my command, beautiful," he laughed. "Good night, Bella. I love you."

"Good night, Edward. I love you, too."

**A/N: Okay, the light fluffy stuff is going to come next chapter. Leave some love (or hate...but hopefully not). Thanks for reading!**

# Nightmares and Renee

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 62: Nightmares and Renee

### EPOV

Bella was home. Bella was going to be okay, physically. I was concerned about her emotional health. I knew I would have to talk to her. To encourage her to go to the counseling center. That first night home, Bella had such violent nightmares. She thrashed in the bed. She even connected with my jaw and I could feel the bruise forming on my face. I gathered her in my arms and held her close, willing the nightmares away. I hummed her lullaby until she calmed down and fell heavily against my chest. Even in death, Jacob is haunting her dreams. If he wasn't already dead, I'd hunt him down and kill that fucker. I eventually fell asleep, holding my poor, broken girl against my chest.

My alarm went off early and I slipped out Bella's arms. She didn't have any more nightmares, which was a good thing. I don't think my body could handle another right hook. I hopped into the shower and scrubbed the hospital smell from my body. After my shower, I walked out and began my ritual of shaving. I looked at my face and I was gnarly. I rubbed the shaving cream on my face and neck and slowly removed the scruff. I had finished shaving and I looked more like myself. I still had dark circles under my eyes and a bruise was on the left side of my face. Bella had really clocked me. I put on the aftershave and walked back into the bedroom and picked up my glasses from the bedside table. I pulled on a pair of boxers and workout pants. I grabbed a long-sleeved grey t-shirt and put it over my head. I walked into the kitchen and found Charlie sitting at the table, drinking some coffee.



## La Cantante

"Mornin' Edward," he said carefully.

"Good morning, Charlie. How did you sleep?" I asked.

"Quite well. That bed in the office is quite comfortable," he said as he sipped his coffee. "I heard Bella's screams last night."

"Yeah, she had a rough night," I murmured sadly. I poured myself a cup of coffee and drank it black. "Even though Jacob's dead, he's still tormenting her."

"He got what was coming to him. I always thought he was a good kid. A bit misguided, but a good kid. That all changed two years ago when he fucked with my daughter," Charlie seethed. "What happened to your face?"

"Bella's hand connected with my jaw when she was having a nightmare," I chuckled darkly.

"Damn, she's got a strong arm," Charlie teased.

"That's not all that's strong," I said. "Do you want some breakfast? I was going to make French Toast for Bella. She hasn't eaten much since she left the hospital."

"Sounds good, Edward," Charlie said with a crinkled smile.

"Why don't you have a seat in the living room and turn on the television? I'll call you when breakfast is ready," I said with a crooked smirk. I gathered the ingredients for the French toast. I made the batter and pulled out the large frying pan and placed it on the stove, heating it up with some oil. I dunked several slices of bread into the batter and put them into the pan. As the bread cooked, I took out some strawberries and cut them up and put them into a small cup, pouring a bit of sugar on them. I finished Charlie's breakfast and called him into the kitchen. He thanked me for the food and dug in. I made Bella's breakfast and put it onto a small tray, along with a cup of coffee, made the way she liked it, strawberries and some warm syrup. I carried the tray to the bedroom and slipped inside. "Bella?"

## La Cantante

She groaned and moved slightly on the bed. I put the tray of food on the dresser. I sat down on the edge of the bed and gently pushed her long, soft hair away from her face. "Beautiful? Wake up. You need to take your medicine," I said quietly, brushing my lips along her jaw.

Her eyes fluttered open and she looked at me. "What time is it?"

"A little after ten in the morning," I said with a smile. "I made you breakfast."

"You did?" she asked, her eyes lightening up with excitement.

"Your favorite," I replied. "Sit up. You get to eat breakfast in bed."

Bella rolled onto her back and eased up, a grimace marring her beautiful features. Her bruise on her face was fading, but was still prominent. I placed a pillow behind her back and I walked to the dresser and picked up the tray with French toast. I placed it over Bella's legs and she smiled. "This looks delicious, Edward. Thank you."

"Anything for you, beautiful. Dig in," I said. I got up and moved to the other side of the bed. I lay down next to Bella and swiped a few strawberries. I handed Bella her glasses and she gasped when she looked at me. "What is it, baby?"

"What happened to your jaw, Edward?" she asked as she ran her fingers over my bruise.

"You were very upset last night, having nightmares, and you clocked me," I said.

"I *did* that?" she squeaked. She pushed the tray of food away from herself and she ran to the bathroom, bawling. She slammed the door and locked it.

"Bella?" I called through the door. "Baby, I'm fine. Please come out."

"No. I'm horrible," she cried.

## La Cantante

"Bella, you're not horrible. Please open the door?" I begged. I sat down near the door and leaned against it. Bella unlocked the door, but didn't open it. I took it as a sign. I opened the door and moved into the bathroom. Bella was sitting on the large rug outside the shower. She was curled up in a ball and crying into her hands. "Baby, please don't cry. I'm fine. I'm more worried about you."

"I hurt you, Edward," she said miserably. "How can you love me if I hurt you?"

"Baby, you were asleep and not aware of what you were doing. You were having a nightmare. Besides, it doesn't hurt. I'm fine," I said inching closer to her.

Bella moved away, still crying. "I'm sorry, Edward. I suck," she sobbed.

"Baby, don't say that. Please. You don't suck. I know that you're hurting, physically and emotionally, but don't go down that road," I begged.

She raised her eyes and they flashed with anger. "What road is that, Edward?" she sneered.

"Beating yourself up. Believing what Jacob told you," I said carefully. "You are too important to me. Baby, please."

"Sorry, Edward. I didn't mean to snap," she murmured.

I moved closer to her and sat down next to her. I tentatively reached for her hand and laced my fingers together with hers. "Bella, I'm worried about you. In the past few months, you've been through a tremendous ordeal. You need to talk to someone. I know that you are comfortable with me, but I'm not a psychologist. I love you and I don't want to lose you," I whispered.

"I know, Edward. Maybe your dad can give me a name of someone," she mumbled.

"I'll talk to him later," I said as I caressed her cheek. She looked at me and her eyes filled with tears. I gathered her in my arms and pulled her into my lap. She

## La Cantante

sobbed against my chest, but I held her, comforting her. I ran my fingers through her hair and gently scratched her back. "Come on, beautiful. You need to finish your breakfast. You haven't eaten much since Wednesday and I can feel your ribs."

Bella nodded and tried to scoot off my lap. I held onto her and picked her up easily. "Edward, put me down. I'm perfectly capable of walking."

"Nope," I said, kissing her nose. "I've got you and I'm not letting you go." I carried her back to the bed and laid her on the pillows. I dashed to the kitchen and reheated her breakfast. She managed to finish all of the French toast that I had prepared for her and took her pain pills, skipping the strawberries. "Don't you want your fruit?"

"Not strawberries. Anything but strawberries," she whispered.

"Why, baby?"

"I was going to the store to get whipped cream, strawberries and chocolate sauce. I wanted to make an 'Edward sundae,'" she said, her voice dead and her face a blank mask.

"'Edward sundae?' Bella, I'm not following you," I said.

"I wanted the same reaction that you had in the limo with the beer. I wanted to use whipped cream, strawberries and chocolate sauce," she replied, still lifeless. "No strawberries."

"I got it, beautiful. No strawberries," I said as I picked up the tray. She rolled over and curled up, her shoulders shaking. I walked out of the bedroom and closed the door. I moved the kitchen, puzzled by the whole interaction.

"Everything okay, Edward?" Charlie asked.

"I don't know. Bella is really having a hard time. I'm going to call my dad to see if he can recommend a therapist to help her," I said with a sad smile.

## La Cantante

"Let me get the dishes, Edward. You cooked. Take care of my girl," he said, clapping my shoulder.

I nodded and walked to the living room, calling my father.

"Dr. Cullen's office," the receptionist chirped.

"I need to speak with Dr. Cullen. This is his son, Edward," I said smoothly.

"Of course, Edward. Hold on, please," she said kindly. The canned classical music came through the speakers of my phone. After a few moments my father came on.

"Edward? Is everything alright?" he asked, his voice slightly panicked.

"Not really, Dad. Do you have a colleague that you would recommend for therapy? Bella is not doing too well. She had horrendous nightmares last night and is shutting down," I said, my voice thick with emotion.

"Hold on, Edward. Let me get my directory," Carlisle said. I heard some shuffling over the phone line. "I have a name of someone that Bella might like. Her name is Dr. Stephenie Lunes. She works with people who are recovering from abusive relationships and their feelings of self-loathing. Here's her number."

Carlisle rattled off a number and I jotted it down on my hand. "Thanks, Dad."

"No problem, Edward. Also, don't worry about your car. Esme and I will purchase you a new one as an early birthday present for you. We know how much you loved your Volvo."

"Dad, I am getting money from the insurance company for the Volvo," I responded.

"I know. Put that money into your checking account and save it for the wedding. Or the honeymoon," he smiled.

## La Cantante

"Dad, you are a dirty, old man," I laughed.

"What? That's what honeymoons are for," he retorted. "What do you think I did with your mother? Were you conceived from immaculate conception?"

"Um, ew. Dad, that is something I don't want to think about," I grumbled.

"Love you, Edward. Give my love to your lovely fiancée," he said.

"Love you, too, Dad. Talk to you later," I said.

"We'll probably come over tomorrow, if that's alright with you. Esme wants to meet Renee and Phil," Carlisle mentioned.

"Call first, okay?"

"Will do, Edward. Bye."

"Bye, Dad." I hung up the phone and walked to the kitchen where I wrote down Dr. Lunes' phone number onto a piece of paper. I walked back to the bedroom where the bed was empty. "Bella?" I ventured further into the bedroom and I heard the shower running. I assumed she was in there. I made the bed and gathered our clothes for the laundry. I tossed them into the washer and put some detergent in. I went back to the bedroom and pulled out my laptop. I couldn't use the desktop as Charlie was in there with the door closed. I did some research on Dr. Lunes. She seemed to be an expert in her field, focusing on young women who suffered through physically and emotionally abusive relationships. I also did some research on head injuries, to see if Bella's behavior was normal. I was grateful that it was.

Bella exited the bathroom, wrapped in her robe. She looked up and gave me a small smile. "I'm sorry, Edward. I want to apologize now for anything that I say or do that is hurtful toward you. It's nothing that you've done. It's all me," she said.

## La Cantante

I hopped off the bed and cupped her cheeks. "Bella, the only thing that you can do to hurt me is leave me. Do you plan on doing that?"

"No."

"Then, we'll be fine. I love you, beautiful."

"I love you, too. I am still sorry, though," she mumbled.

"Isabella Marie Swan. Stop it," I warned.

"Fine, Edward Anthony Masen Cullen," she teased, poking me in the stomach. "You need to eat too. You're too skinny."

"I haven't had one of your gourmet meals in a few days. That and I haven't had much of an appetite either," I admitted.

"I'll cook something tonight," she said.

"Over my dead body. You're healing. I'll figure something out, Bella," I said.

"I don't want to eat chicken fingers and frozen pizza," she whined.

"You won't. Trust me. Please?" I said, giving her my lopsided grin.

"Just don't burn down the apartment. I don't want to move again. I don't have the energy," she teased.

"It's a little hard to burn down the apartment with electric cooking," I countered.

"Touché," she laughed. She walked into the closet and picked out a pair of yoga pants and one of my hoodies. She walked to the dresser and pulled out some underwear and sports bra. She pulled the panties up under the robe, along with pants. "Edward, can you help me with my bra? I can't comfortably hook it because the injuries to my ribs."

## La Cantante

"I'd rather be removing it, but of course," I said. She slipped her arms through the straps and I clasped the tiny hooks together.

"Edward?" she asked after she put on my hoodie.

"Yes, love?"

"Please be patient with me. I don't know when I'll be able to be with you, *that* way. But, I want to you know that I do love you, even if I can't show it."

"Bella, you've been through hell and back. I don't want to push you into something that you are not comfortable with. Besides, I wouldn't want to hurt you when we do become intimate again. I would hate myself if I hurt you," I said as I brushed a damp curl from her cheek. "You set the pace."

"Thank you, Edward. You're too good to me. I don't deserve you," she said as she laid her hands on my chest.

"Nonsense. I don't deserve you," I said, wrapping my arms around her waist. She returned my embrace and laid her head against my heart. She took several deep breaths. "I got that phone number you asked for."

"Oh? Did your dad recommend someone?" she asked her head still against my heart.

"Yeah. Her name is Dr. Stephenie Lunes. She's an expert in dealing with patients who have lived through physical and emotional abuse. She's younger, too. I think you'll like her," I said against her soft fragrant hair. It smelled like my shampoo, though. "Did you use different shampoo, Bella?"

"Um, yeah. I used yours. The smell of strawberries makes me sick to my stomach," she mumbled.

"I'm pretty certain you don't want to use my *manly* shampoo. Would like me to have Alice get some new stuff?" I asked.



## La Cantante

She nodded and squeezed my waist. We stood there, not moving for a several minutes. "Bella?"

"I'm afraid, Edward," she said quietly.

"Of what, beautiful," I asked.

"That it's all a dream. That Jacob still has me and he's still alive. I'm so afraid," she sniffled. "You're the only one who makes me feel safe. Hearing your heartbeat proves to me that I'm awake and that I'm safe."

"Oh, Bella," I said as I squeezed her closer to me. "If I could do something to make what you feel go away, I would."

"Just hold me, Edward. Make me feel safe, please," she cried.

"I'll hold you for the rest of our lives," I answered. "Forever, Bella."

I faintly heard the buzzer near the front door. I tried to pull away, but Bella wouldn't budge. "Baby, there's someone at the door. I need to buzz them in."

Bella reluctantly let go of me, but laced her fingers with mine. We walked to the front door. "Hello?"

"Edward, my man! Can you buzz me in? I have Renee and Phil with me," Emmett boomed.

Bella rolled her eyes and curled next to me. "Hang on, Em," I said as I hit the appropriate button. I opened the door and led Bella into the living room onto the couch. I pulled a blanket and tucked her in. She gave me a pointed glare, which I returned, wrinkling my nose. "Prepare to be spoiled, beautiful."

"Hello?" Renee sang.

Bella groaned and grabbed my shirt. "Can we just hide ourselves in our bedroom? I really don't want to deal with her today."

## La Cantante

"Sorry, baby," I said as I kissed her nose. I turned and greeted Renee and Phil. "Hi, everyone. How are you doing? How was the hotel?"

"It was wonderful. Remind me to thank your mom for the recommendation," Renee gushed. She sat down next to Bella and began fussing over her, adjusting the blanket and hugging her. Bella stiffly responded, obviously not wanting to be touched. "How are you doing, baby girl?"

"Fine, Mom," she said tersely. "I'm tired and sore still."

"Are Edward and Charlie taking good care of my baby?" she asked.

"They are both doing a great job," Bella said dryly.

"Would either of you like something to drink?" I asked.

"What are you offering?" Phil asked.

I nodded to the kitchen and opened the fridge. He plucked a beer from the door and grabbed a water bottle for Renee. Emmett watched Phil as he walked back to living room, giving Renee her water. I handed him a coke and plucked one for myself. "You and Bella are so much like your dad, it's funny."

"Yeah. Neither one of us have anything of Renee, personality-wise. We got her looks, but her flakiness, not so much," he admitted.

"Has she said anything about Bella's accident?" I asked quietly.

"She almost blamed Bella for the whole thing. She said that she led Jacob on and that her flirtatiousness caused him to become infatuated with her," Emmett seethed.

"What the fuck?" I fumed. "That's ludicrous."

"My mom is a sweet lady, but not all there in the head," Emmett said, making the 'cuckoo' gesture with his hand. "I'm not sure how my dad handled her. I

guess that's why she left."

"We probably should save Bella," I said. We walked out and Bella gave me a grateful look. I sat down next to her, lacing my fingers with hers. I kissed her forehead. She laid her head on my chest, to hear my heart.

"So, Edward, Bella has told me that you guys have set a date for your wedding," Renee said with a touch of sarcasm in her voice. Charlie, who was sitting on a chair near the fireplace, grunted.

"Yeah, we have. August 13th," I answered.

"In four years?" she pressed.

"No, this year," I answered.

"Aren't you a little young to be getting married?" Renee asked, a frown marring her features.

"Mom! Stop it. Bella just woke up from a coma and you're pressing the two of them about being too young to be married," Emmett barked.

"What? It's a logical question," she answered.

"Renee, with all due respect, it's our decision to make," I answered.

"If you want me to help pay for the wedding, than I suggest you wait," she said, sitting back onto the couch, crossing her legs.

"Money is not an issue, Renee. We don't need your help to pay for the wedding," I snapped. Bella got up and darted to the bedroom. I heard the door slam.

"Good job, Mom. Why don't you just tell her not to get married? Could you be a little more insensitive," Emmett snarled.

## La Cantante

"Renee now is not the time to bring up these things," Charlie said from his chair.

"This happened under your watch, Charles David Swan," she growled. "You gave Edward your *blessing* and now my baby is getting married. Is she pregnant?"

I took off my glasses and pinched my nose. This can't be happening. "No, Renee. She's not pregnant. If you excuse me, I have to check on my *fiancée*," I said as exited the living room. I knocked on the door of our bedroom. I heard Bella crying in the room. I pushed open the door and eased into the bed. Bella turned over and wrapped her arms around my waist, laying her head on my chest, still crying. I held her as she processed the hurtful words her mom had said. We lay there for an hour. Bella finally pulled away and sat up. She crossed her legs and looked at me.

"As much as I hate to admit it, my mom has brought up some good points. How are we going to pay for this wedding? I certainly don't have the money," she said quietly.

"Baby, don't worry about it. Please. I made a promise to you when I put that ring on your finger to take care of you. If that means that you get the wedding of your dreams, then that's what I'm going to do," I said fervently.

"Edward, don't," she said, cupping my face. "You don't have to prove anything to me. You shouldn't have to pay for our wedding because I have fucked up parents. It's wrong."

"No, Bella. The way your mom is treating you is wrong. Especially since what you've been through," I said, holding her tiny hands against my cheeks. "You deserve the best, like I've said before."

"And you are the best," she whispered, leaning forward to kiss my lips. She grimaced. "Ow."

## La Cantante

"Take it easy, baby," I said. I heard a faint knock on the door. I pulled my face from Bella's soft fingers. I got off the bed and walked to the door. A very contrite Renee was standing in front of me.

"Can I come in? I want to apologize, to both of you," she said, looking at her fingers.

I moved aside and let Renee enter our bedroom. She sat down on the armchair near the bed. Bella looked at Renee warily. "What do you want to say now, Renee?" she seethed. "More insults. More insinuations. I loved the pregnant comment."

"Bella, I'm truly sorry. You know how I feel about getting married young," she began. "I was only 18 when Charlie and I got married."

"Because you were pregnant. With Emmett. Remember?" she snapped.

"You're right, Bella. However, I didn't want you to relive my mistakes," she said.

"Are you saying my relationship with Edward is a mistake? If you are, then I suggest you leave," she fumed.

"Bella. No, I would never say that. I can see how much you care for each other. You move with each other, like magnets. Where he moves, you move," she said.

"We more than just care for each other, Renee," Bella said. "We love each other. Hence, the wedding?"

"Right, I know."

"Renee, you need to know something. I love Bella with my mind, my body and my soul. She is my other half, truly. I would do anything for her, to ensure her safety, her happiness and well-being. When she was in her coma, I thought my heart would stop beating if she didn't wake up. I don't appreciate having my

## La Cantante

feelings for your daughter being questioned. Nor do I appreciate the insinuations you made earlier. I mean you no disrespect, but you are a guest in my home and have no right to speak to me or Bella in such a manner," I said calmly.

"You're right, Edward. I'm sorry. To both of you," she said as she got up. "I can see that we're no longer welcome, so I'm going to ask Emmett to take us back to the hotel."

Renee went to Bella and gently patted her hand. She snatched it away and turned her back on her mother. She looked at me with sadness in her eyes. I stared at her indifferently and held the door open for her. She left the room quietly and asked Emmett to drive her and Phil back to the hotel. Emmett grumbled but took them. I turned and looked at Bella. She was laying on my side of the bed, with her back to me.

"Bella?"

"Edward, can I just have some time to myself?" she asked.

"Of course. Do you need anything?" I responded.

"Can I have my ativan?"

"Of course, beautiful." I walked to the bathroom and pulled a pill from her prescription bottle. I filled up a glass that we kept in the bathroom and sat down next to Bella, holding out the tiny pill and water. She turned and took the pill without the water. "Let me know if you need anything, okay?"

She nodded and hugged her body, almost trying to keep herself together. I kissed her forehead and left the bedroom, shutting the door.

"Edward? I'm sorry about my ex-wife," Charlie said from the couch. "What she said was uncalled for and inappropriate. Phil, Emmett and I told her as such. We all but forced her to apologize."

## La Cantante

"Charlie, it's not your fault," I said.

"I know, but I still feel bad," he said, with a frown. "She hurt my baby girl. Probably more than what Jacob did."

"She's very upset," I answered.

"I know. I've had to deal with the 'Renee' aftermath, before. It's not pretty. That woman, while she can be the most loving and sweet, can turn into the most cruel vindictive person on the planet."

"I just hope that she'll finally realizes that what Bella and I have is not some sort of 'crush,'" I said as I sank down on my couch.

"I think she does. She's too stubborn to admit it. She sees the love that you have for each other, but appears to be jealous of it," Charlie surmised.

"Why would she be jealous?" I asked, astonished.

"She wants what you and Bella have."

"She has Phil. He seems to be over the moon for her," I chuckled.

"But it's not 'fairy tale' love. You and Bella have 'fairy tale' love," Charlie clarified. "Love that conquers all and transcends all the bad shit."

"Oh. I never really thought of it like that," I whispered.

"Renee may have her doubts, but I don't. Ignore her. That's what I did the last few years of our marriage," Charlie said with a sardonic grin.

"I'll try." My phone chirped from my pocket of my pants. I pulled it out. I had a text from Emmett.

*Renee and Phil are flying out tonight. They do not want to stay any longer - Em*

## La Cantante

*That's probably a wise decision on their part - E*

*Phil ripped her a new one. He was fucking pissed at her - Em*

*Join the club. I like Phil better already - E*

*I'm going to take them to the airport and then I'm picking up Rose, Jas, and Alice. You want me to bring some dinner? - Em*

*Chinese? - E*

*Hmmmm...spring rolls. Perfect, Eddie! - Em*

*Damn it! Emmett! It's EDWARD - E*

*I'm just ruffling your feathers, EDDIE. See you later with food - Em*

*Thanks, Emmy - E*

*Fuck you, douche - Em*

*No thanks - E*

I sat back on the couch and pulled a pillow behind my head. I closed my eyes and settled in for a nap. I didn't get the best night's sleep and needed some extra shut eye. I put my glasses on the coffee table and pulled the blanket that Bella had used earlier around my body. My mind became blank and I eventually drifted off into a deep sleep.

xx LC xx

My eyes fluttered open and I heard the apartment buzzer. I got up and walked to the intercom. "Hello?" I asked my voice rough with sleep.

"Eddie! It's Emmy. Let us in. We have food," Emmett boomed.



## La Cantante

I buzzed them in and went back to the coffee table to grab my glasses after I propped the door open. I slipped into the bedroom and quickly brushed my teeth. Bella was still sleeping in our bed, soft snores coming from the mound of pillows. I closed the door and walked back out to the living room of the apartment.

"Where's Bella?" Alice chirped.

"She's sleeping," I said. "We've had a rough day."

"I'm sorry, Edward. I brought this for her," Alice said, holding a bag. I looked inside and there was a huge bottle of shampoo from the salon that she gets her hair cut.

"How did you know?" I sputtered. "I was going to call you to bring some new shampoo for Bella. She doesn't like the strawberry scent anymore."

"I had a feeling. It's very fresh smelling," Alice explained.

"Emmett told us what Renee did. I can't believe she had the gall to say those things," Rosalie said sadly. I led them into the living room.

"Neither did I. I was flummoxed, to be honest," I said.

Charlie came out when he heard the commotion. "Hey kids," he said uncomfortably.

"Everyone, this is my dad, Charlie Swan. Dad, this is Alice, Jasper and you know Rosie," Emmett introduced.

"Nice to meet all of you," Charlie said as he sat down. "How are you doing, Rose?"

"I'm good, Charlie. I wished we could have seen each other on better circumstances," she said sadly.

## La Cantante

"Me, too. I smelled food," Charlie said with a grin.

"Yeah. I brought Chinese for everyone," Emmett said. "Edward, why don't you wake up sleeping beauty and we'll get the party started."

I nodded. I got up and walked to the bedroom. Alice was following me. "Alice, what are you doing?"

"I want to see my best friend," she said, with a pout.

"At least wait until she's coherent. You'll see her in a little bit," I chastised, turning her around and pushing her back toward the kitchen. She stuck her tongue out at me and I flipped her off. I went into the bedroom and sat down next to the 'Bella-lump.' "Bella, time to wake up," I whispered.

"Don't wanna," she mumbled.

"If you don't wake up, you won't be able to sleep tonight," I said as I pulled down the covers. "Besides, Alice, Rose and Jasper are here. They want to see you."

Bella rolled over and looked at me; one eye squinted closed, with an adorable grimace on her face. "When did they get here?"

"Like five minutes ago," I said, brushing her hair from her face.

"Hmmm," she answered as she got out of the bed. She swayed and I quickly caught her.

"Are you okay?" I asked.

"Just a little dizzy. Got up too fast. Can you walk with me to the bathroom so I brush my teeth?" she asked.

"Of course, my love," I said as I snaked my arm around her waist. I stayed with her until her teeth were brushed and she pulled her hair back into a messy bun.

## La Cantante

She looked at me in the mirror. "What?"

"Are you going to watch me pee too?" she asked.

"No, baby. Call if you need me," I said as I closed the door. I stayed in the bedroom in case something happened. She walked out and rolled her eyes. "Can I help it if I worry?"

"No, Edward. Thank you for waiting," she said as she hugged me. She kissed my chest, right on my swan. I led her out into the living room where everyone had gathered. "Hey everyone."

Alice bounced up and ran to Bella, just stopping short of running her over. "I've missed you, Bella," she gushed as she threw her arms around Bella's neck, gripping her tightly.

"Alice. Relax," I warned.

"Sorry," she apologized. "How are you feeling?"

"I'm better. I still have a nasty headache and I'm sore everywhere. However, I'm alive and that's a good thing," she chuckled.

"That's a very good thing. I don't know if my brother would have handled it if you didn't make it," Alice said sadly, looking at me. I gave her a warning with my eyes, but she chose to ignore it. "Do you want something to eat?"

Bella nodded and Alice pulled her from my arms. She sat down next to Alice and was handed a plateful of food. Alice pointed to a spot on the floor near Bella and there was another plate of food for me. I sat down and dug into dinner. I inhaled all of it, making up for all the missed meals from earlier this week. Bella ate most of her meal. She gave me the rest, chastising me saying I was too skinny. I ate it without complaint as I was still hungry. After dinner, Alice and Rose did the dishes. Emmett set up a movie, some light fluffy movie to make our minds become mush. I moved back onto the couch and Bella settled next to me, laying her head on my chest. "I love you, Edward. Thank

## La Cantante

you," she said quietly.

"I love you, too, beautiful. You're welcome, although I don't know why you're thanking me," I said into her hair.

"Just for dealing with my shit and being there for me," she said, looking up at me. Her chocolate eyes were glistening with tears.

"I've said it before and I'll say it again. I'll do anything for you, baby. Anything."

She smiled and leaned up. I brushed my lips against hers, eliciting a sigh from my beautiful girl. She gently ran her fingers across my cheek before turning her attention back to the movie. At some point, Bella must have drifted off to sleep, as she became heavier on my chest. When the movie ended, everyone left quietly. Rose and Alice kissed Bella on the cheek. Rose ruffled my hair as she walked past us. Jasper gave me a smile and ran his fingers through Bella's hair. She settled closer to me and gripped my waist tighter. Charlie let everyone out and headed to bed. He was catching a flight back to Seattle tomorrow early and needed to get some sleep. I whispered my goodnights and gingerly picked Bella up, carrying her to the bedroom. I changed into some pajamas and got into bed. Bella curled up against my chest and laid her head right over my heart. She mumbled that she loved me and wrapped her arms around me. I gently kissed her forehead and my own eyes drifted shut. Today was tough, but hopefully it was a step toward healing for my beautiful girl. I prayed that it was.

**A/N: What do you think about Renee? Superbitch, right? She'll come around, I hope. Leave some love!**

# Therapy

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 63: Therapy

### BPOV

I don't remember the end of the movie that I started with the group. I don't remember being carried to bed. However, I'm in bed, safely ensconced in Edward's arms. His breathing is even and I can tell that he's asleep. I look at him in the moonlight and he looks like an angel. His bronze locks look black in the silvery light of the moon. His pale skin almost looks translucent. I trace the curve of his cheek and move down to his jaw. He holds me closer to his body and murmurs, "Bella." It sounds like a prayer. I smile and kiss his lips as he slumbers. I extricate myself from his arms and go to the kitchen. I'm actually hungry. I search the fridge for something to eat, but come up empty. I open the freezer and find some premade cookies. They sound appetizing and I preheat the oven. I break apart the cookie dough and put them onto a cookie sheet. I look in the pantry and find some frosting and smile as this is the worst midnight snack ever, but the best at the same time. I needed comfort food. The oven dings to alert me that it is preheated. I put the cookies into the range and set the timer.

I walk to the living room and turn on the television. I sit down on the couch and surf through the channels. I find an episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and decide to keep it there. The oven chirps and I get up to get my snack. I pull out the cookies and put them onto a large plate. I pick up the plate and the frosting and sit down to watch my show. I dip a knife into the frosting and spread it on my cookie and sink my teeth into the sugary goodness. I heard a door open and a very rumpled Edward walked into the living room. "What

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are you doing, beautiful?"

"Eating a snack," I said my mouth full of cookie.

"Very healthy, Bella," he laughed. He was shirtless and his muscles rippled as he sat down next to me. "Give me one."

I spread some frosting onto a cookie and hand it to him. He groans and sits back against the couch. "Very good, beautiful. However, why are you baking cookies at three in the morning?"

"I couldn't sleep anymore," I said.

"Sorry, baby," he said as he tucked a hair that fell out of my ponytail.

"Edward, I've been thinking," I began.

"This sounds serious," he quipped.

"Shut it, Cullen," I said, smacking his stomach. "I'm going to call Dr. Lunes."

"That's good, Bella. You need to talk to someone. I am thankful that you trust me to talk to me, but I'm not a professional. Besides, my vision of you is skewed. You're perfect in my eyes," he laughed.

"I'm far from it," I said, rolling my eyes. "I'm a fucking mess."

"However, you are able to recognize that and that's the first step in healing," Edward replied. "Though a 'fucking mess' is a bit overdramatic. Rough around the edges is a bit apropos."

"Whatever, Edward. Another cookie?" I asked, holding a frosted cookie to him.

He nodded and quickly grabbed it. He stuffed the entire cookie in his mouth and moaned. "These are good."

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"Comfort food," I responded as I nibbled on my cookie.

Edward and I finished the plate of cookies and tub of frosting. We stayed up until the sun came over the horizon, watching Star Trek. Edward just caressing my arms and back as I laid with my head over his heart. It's steady beat was comforting me, soothing my broken mind. His caresses slowed down and I knew he had fallen back asleep. I turned off the television and closed my own eyes. My mind eventually cleared and I fell back asleep.

xx LC xx

"Bella?"

I blinked my eyes open and rubbed my face. "Dad?"

"I'm heading out, baby girl," he said. He had his duffel slung over his shoulder and a sad smile on his face.

"Why do you have to go, Daddy?" I asked, tears filling my eyes.

"I have to go back for my treatments. I have an appointment tomorrow that I can't miss," he said. "I'm sorry, Bella."

I got up from Edward's embrace. He was still asleep, snoring lightly. I move stiffly and wrap my arms around my dad's waist. "I'll miss you, Daddy. Thank you for coming," I say into his chest.

"Bella, I'm your father. I can't imagine you going through this without me. I love you, baby girl."

"I love you, too, Daddy," I sniffle.

"Was last night better?" he asked.

"Yeah. No nightmares. However, I woke up around two in the morning and was up until the sun rose," I said. "Edward came and sat with me."

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"He's a good man. A very good man. Has a huge heart. He loves you tremendously," Charlie said with a wistful smile.

"I love him so much, Dad. But how can Mom say those things about us?" I said sadly.

"She's jealous, Bella. She wants what you have with Edward. She has Phil, but he's not her 'prince charming,'" Charlie explained.

"Oh. Well, if she keeps it up, she will lose me and Emmett," I said bitterly.

"I think she knows that. Give her another chance," Charlie coaxed.

"I'll try, but I'm not making any promises. She hurt me, Dad. She hurt me a lot," I mumbled.

"I know, Bella. However, you need to know that I love you. So does Emmett. Most importantly, that young man who is snoring on your couch loves you the most," Charlie said, chuckling at Edward. I giggle as Edward snorts and curls up on the couch.

I heard the buzz of the intercom. I walked over and clicked it on. "Hello?"

"Isabelly? It's Em. Is Dad ready to go?" he asked.

"I'll send him down, Em."

"Love you, Isabelly."

"You too, Em."

I look at my dad and he moves to the door. "I'll call you as soon as I land in Seattle. Take care of yourself, Bells. I love you, sweetheart."

"I love you, too, Dad. Have a safe flight," I said as I hugged him. He wrapped his arms around my shoulders and gave me a tight squeeze. He leaves the



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apartment with a smile, gently patting my cheek. I watch as he enters the elevator and wave as the door closes. Unwilling tears fall down my cheeks as my father leaves the apartment. I close the door to my apartment and I slink down to the floor. My emotions take over and I let my tears fall freely.

"Bella?"

"It's nothing, Edward. My dad just left and I'm a little upset," I said.

"Baby, it's okay. At least move away from the drafty door," Edward said as he held his hands out for me to get up. I reach up and he gently lifts me. He wraps his arms around me and moves us back into the living room, tossing the blanket over both of us.

We spend the day just lazing around the apartment. Edward checked his email and received his missing assignments from his professors. He spent most of the afternoon working on his homework. I try to do some reading but I got a massive headache after about fifteen minutes. Edward glared at me saying that if I keep doing shit like that I am delaying my recovery. Around two, Edward's cell phone goes off and it's his parents. They want to come over but Edward convinces them not to. I was laying in the bedroom with the blinds closed and my head buried in a pillow trying to make my headache go away. I didn't want to take my pain meds, but eventually had to because I felt like my head was going to explode. I took a nap after I take my medication and slept until after six.

Edward had made me dinner. He looked awfully pleased with himself when he came into the bedroom carrying a tray of chicken, steamed vegetables and wild rice. I dug in and ate most of the food on my plate. Edward had given me too much. He frowned when I didn't finish. I know I hadn't eaten much the past few days, but I don't want to gorge myself. I have a figure to maintain. Jeez.

After dinner, I get up and help around the house. I stripped the bed in the office and put the sheets into the washing machine. Edward was working in the living room on an assignment for introduction to education. He was also working on an email to Garrett. He needed to start his observation hours and was working

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with Garrett to get the hours in. Around nine, I had remade the bed in the office and plopped down next to Edward. He was leaning back against the couch, his arm thrown over his face, glasses hanging from his hand.

"Are you okay, Edward?" I asked.

"Yeah. Just overwhelmed with all the work I need to do," he mumbled.

"You can do it, baby. I know you can. If you're overwhelmed, imagine how I'm feeling. Carlisle said I can't go back to class for another week," I said dejectedly.

"The professors are going to work with you to modify your assignments because of your injury, beautiful. Carlisle had already contacted most of them and vaguely told them about the nature of your confession. The only professor who is not bending is Dr. Hafenrichter, which I find ironic. He teaches *educational* psychology. By profession, he works with students with special needs. He should be willing to accommodate," Edward mumbled.

"Yeah, I spoke with your dad while you were showering. Your phone was ringing and I picked it up," I said. "I hope you don't mind."

"Bella, please. What's mine is yours, baby. Speaking of phones, the police recovered your purse and cell phone from the Volvo. We need to go to the police station and sign for them at some point," Edward said, cupping my cheek.

"Can we see the Volvo?" I asked quietly.

"Why, Bella?"

"I need to see the damage to the car so I can believe that Jacob is really gone," I reasoned.

"I think the car is still at the garage at the police station. I'll call Detective Lutz and make arrangements for tomorrow after I come back from University

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Singers, okay?" Edward said.

I nod and give him a sweet kiss on the lips. "I love you, Edward."

"I love you, too, baby. I've got to get to bed. I have an early class tomorrow. Are you going to stay up or you coming to bed?"

"I'll try sleeping but if I can't, I'll just come out here and watch some television," I answer. "This whole thing has got my days and nights messed up."

Edward smiled and leaned over to kiss me. His lips felt so warm against mine. A jolt went through my body and my hands fisted into his hair, tugging the soft coppery locks. I deepened the kiss for a moment and got a groan from Edward. I pulled away, looking contrite. "Sorry, Edward."

"Why are you apologizing? Because you pulled away? Bella, you set the pace," he said, kissing my knuckles and fingers.

I give him a small smile and kiss his lips softly. He got up slowly and held out a hand for me. I laced my fingers with his and got up off the couch. We walked to the bedroom and we crawled into bed. Edward took off his shirt and slipped off his jeans, putting them into the hamper in the closet. I lay down with my head on his chest, listening to the steady pulse of his heart. I breathe deeply and let sleep overcome me.

xx LC xx

Edward's alarm went early the next morning. I had slept through the night without any nightmares. Thank God! Edward held me tightly before he got up out of bed. "Are you going to be okay, beautiful?"

"I'll be fine, Edward. I'm going to call Dr. Lunes and schedule an appointment," I replied, pressing a kiss against his chest.

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"Call me if you need anything or something happens. I'll be back in a blink of an eye," he said, looking at me with concern. "I hate leaving you here."

"Edward, I'll be fine. Go to class, handsome. I'll be here when you get back," I said, kissing his soft, pouty lips.

"Ugh, fine," he said as he got out of bed. He grabbed a pair of boxers from the dresser and walked into the bathroom. I heard him putter around in the bathroom, showering and shaving. I got up and decided to make Edward some breakfast. It wasn't fancy, two pop tarts and a cup of coffee, but I wanted to make him *something*. I put the pop tarts on a plate and poured the coffee into his travel mug. I walked back into the bedroom and found Edward bent over in the closet, the muscles in his back were straining and he looked like an Adonis.

I cleared my throat and Edward jumped at my voice. "I made you breakfast, handsome."

He turned around and gave me his signature smile and reached for the plate and mug. "Thank you so much, beautiful."

I smiled and walked back to the bed, crawling into Edward's side, inhaling his scent. Edward finished getting dressed. He looked delicious in a pair of dark wash jeans and black sweater. He also wore his black Doc Martens and his Cullen Crest on his wrist. He stuffed his breakfast into his mouth, getting a bit on his sweater. "Edward, come here." He quirked a brow but walked over to me. I reached up and brushed the crumbs off his sweater. He rolled his eyes at me. "You're the sloppy eater, Edward."

"Shut it, Swan," he teased, ruffling my hair. "I'm going to go. Call me if you need anything. I'll miss you tremendously. I'll try to ring you as I'm walking to introduction to education, okay?"

I nodded, tears gathering in my eyes.

*Why am I crying? He's going to class, not going to some exotic island in Brazil.*

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"Baby, don't cry," he said, kneeling next to me. "I'll be back in a few hours. I promise."

"I know, Edward. I don't know why my emotions are all over the place," I said, wiping the tears from my cheeks.

"I have a few theories," Edward said quietly.

"Let's hear them, Cullen," I teased.

"Number one, your brain was slammed into your skull and you were in a coma for a day and a half. Number two, your psycho ex-boyfriend kidnapped you and fucked with your mind. Number three, your mom is a bitch," Edward counted off.

"Those sound pretty accurate," I mumble.

Edward leaned forward so his head was against mine. "I don't want to leave you, Bella. I am physically ill at the thought of leaving you."

"Someone needs to get my assignments for me," I said, lacing my fingers through his damp hair. "I'm sorry, Edward."

"Don't apologize, beautiful," he said, not moving. He looked at his watch.

"Fuck. I've got to go. I love you, beautiful."

"I love you more, Edward."

"Bella," he warned.

"Go get educated, Edward," I giggled. He rolled his eyes and got up off the floor. He picked up his coffee mug and gave me a sad look before leaving the bedroom. "Go, Edward. I'll be fine."

He narrowed his eyes and then stuck his tongue out at me. "Call me! Love you!" he yelled as he left the apartment.

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"Love you too!" I called back. I lay back on the bed and my eyes drifted shut. I didn't want to sleep, but unfortunately did. I woke up to the apartment phone ringing. I grumbled and reached across the bed to answer the phone. The movement didn't agree with my ribs and I felt a searing pain go across my chest. It took my breath away. I fell onto the bed, sobbing in pain. The phone stopped ringing and the answering machine picked up.

"Bella? Pick up! Are you okay? Baby?" a panicked voice of Edward came through the answering machine. I was still laying on the bed, crying in pain. The erratic breaths that I was taking was not helping the pain in my chest.

"Edward," I croaked. I moved to the phone and managed to pick it up. I clicked on the phone. "Edward? Hello?" I was only met with a dial tone. I cried out and punched the pillows. The pain in my chest only amplified. I tried to calm myself, taking deep breaths, but it only exacerbated my pain. "Fuck you, Jacob Black." I screamed as I hurled the phone to the wall, shattering it. I collapsed on the bed, bawling at my physical pain and my emotional pain. I had apparently cried myself asleep as I woke up to a very panicked Edward, Rosalie and Alice in the bedroom. I blinked my eyes open and tears streamed down my cheeks.

"Bella," Edward said sadly as he crawled into bed with me.

"It hurts, Edward," I cried against his chest. "I tried to reach for the phone and my ribs."

Edward mumbled something to Alice and Rosalie. They went separate directions and returned momentarily. Rose had some pop tarts on a plate and a bottle of water. Alice had my pain medication. "Bella, you need to eat something so you can take your pain meds," Edward said soothingly. He put the plate with pop tarts onto the bed in between us and broke one of them apart. He held up a small portion of the pastry and I took it from him. I nibbled on it, swallowing it. My throat felt raw from all of the crying. I managed to choke down one pop tart before I couldn't do it anymore. I took my pain pill with the entire bottle of water and collapsed against Edward, crying quietly. Alice and Rosalie went out into the living room and Edward stayed with me. "I should

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have stayed with you, Bella. I'm so sorry," he cried.

"Edward, it's not your fault," I mumbled. I could feel the pain medication start to work. The searing pain that I felt in my chest was fading away. "Please don't blame yourself."

"It's hard not to," he muttered miserably. "It's my job to protect you and I failed you in the worst way imaginable."

"Edward, stop it. You're always telling me to not believe what Jacob told me. Now you're spouting the same shit about yourself. That's fucking bullshit," I screamed. "Can I borrow your phone? I broke the house phone."

Edward looked at me. I pointed to the wall where the shattered phone lay. He raised his brows and reached into his pocket, grabbing his cell phone. He handed it to me and I dialed the number for Dr. Lunes. It rang a few time before someone picked up.

"Good morning. This is Ridge Clinical Services. How may I direct your call?" the receptionist asked.

"I need to make an appointment with Dr. Stephenie Lunes. I've been referred by Dr. Carlisle Cullen," I said quietly.

"Of course, hold please."

Some canned jazz music filtered through the speakers of the cell phone. I nibbled on my bottom lip as I waited for something to happen. Edward was looking at the duvet cover, idly picking invisible lint off of it. "Good morning, this is Dr. Lunes."

"Dr. Lunes? My name is Isabella Swan and I got your name from Dr. Carlisle Cullen," I began.

"Yes, Carlisle mentioned I'd be getting a phone call from you. What can I do for you, Isabella?" she asked kindly.

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"I want to make an appointment to meet with you. I'm dealing with some issues and I can't get over them," I said, tears falling down my cheeks.

"I'd be happy to meet with you, Isabella. I actually have a cancellation this afternoon at 3. Can you come in today?"

"Hold on, Dr. Lunes," I said, putting her on hold. "Can you take me to an appointment at 3?"

Edward looked at me and nodded. His eyes were distant and sad. I frowned and gently rubbed my hand across his cheek. I clicked the phone off hold, "I can be there at 3. I'm at Emerson University. About how long is it to get to your office from there?"

"I'm actually in my satellite office close to Emerson. It'll take about ten minutes," she said. She gave me directions and we hung up.

"Edward?" I asked, running my fingers through his hair. He clamped his eyes shut and tears spilled over his cheeks. "I need to go to the police station and get my purse. It has my insurance card in there. Baby, please don't cry. I need you to be strong. I can't do this without you."

"I'm so sorry, Bella. So sorry," he said, looking up at me with glistening eyes. "I can't lose you. I just can't."

"You won't, Edward," I said. "I need to shower. Shouldn't you be at University Singers right now?"

"I grabbed Rose and Alice and raced back to the apartment when you didn't pick up the phone. I could barely pay attention during education because I was worried that something happened to you. I ran into them as I was walking to Esme's car. They saw my frenzied state and came with me."

"Edward, thank you, but I'm fine now. I'm going to shower and I'll be ready to go in about an hour. I love you, baby," I said.



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"I love you, too. I'm still sorry," he mumbled, caressing my jaw. He picked me up gingerly and carried me to the bathroom. I wanted to protest, but he wanted, almost needed to do this. He set me down on the edge of the tub and turned on the shower. He gathered fresh towels and handed me a huge bottle of shampoo. "A gift from Alice. She suspected that you got sick of your shampoo and brought this yesterday. I'll be in the living room if you need me."

Edward kissed my forehead and cupped my face. He gave me a tight smile. I poked his sides, attempting to tickle him and his smile relaxed. He leaned down and brushed his lips against mine, sighing at the contact. He pulled away and closed the bathroom door. I stripped out of my clothes and stepped into the shower, enjoying the hot spray. I carefully washed my body, being mindful of my ribs as they were tender. I washed my hair with my new shampoo. It smelled like the high end stuff that was used when I got my hair cut. After I rinsed my hair, I stepped out of the shower and wrapped my body with the towel that Edward had set out for me. I quickly dried my hair and let it fall naturally. I attempted to put in my contacts and they went in easily. I put on some light makeup, covering my bruises as best I could. I walked out of the bathroom and found Rose and Alice sitting on the freshly made bed.

"How are you doing, Bella?" Alice asked.

"I'm better now. Thanks. I appreciate the huge bottle of shampoo, Alice," I said, giving her a hug.

"I had a feeling," she said with a knowing grin.

"Edward said that you are going to see a therapist," Rose said carefully.

"Yeah, I'm meeting with Dr. Lunes today at three, after we go to the police station to get my purse and phone," I replied as I walked to the closet and pulled out a pair of jeans and a loose sweater. I walked to the dresser and picked out some panties and a bra. I was hesitant on wearing a real bra, so I picked a comfortable 'non-sports' bra. I slipped my panties on under my towel and pulled up my jeans. "Can one of you help me with putting on my bra?"

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Rose nodded and got up. I slipped the straps over my shoulders and adjusted the cups. Rose hooked the bra for me and handed me my deep purple sweater. I put it on slowly, shaking my hair out of the sweater. Alice went into the closet and took out my black Doc Martens and a pair of purple woolen socks. She leaned down and put the shoes and socks on my feet. I protested but she looked at me with a playful smirk.

"Thanks," I said with a shy smile.

"Bella, I know that you are dealing with a lot right now, but Alice and I are planning a girls weekend away. Esme, you, Alice, Angela and I are going to spend some time at my parents' villa in Vermont over President's day weekend. I know we were supposed to go and find your wedding dress, but you need this. I would say invite Renee, but after this weekend, it probably wouldn't be the best decision," Rose said.

"I'd like that. I'd like that a lot. I know that I've been monopolizing my time with Edward and I don't want abandon my friendships just because I'm engaged," I said. I gave Rose a hug. Alice came behind us and wrapped her arms around both of us. "I love you both. Thank you for being such wonderful friends."

"No, Bella. We're sisters," Alice said. Rose nodded.

"Thank you for being my sisters," I corrected. We all pulled apart and headed into the living room. Edward was on his laptop, typing furiously. He looked up when we came out and his features moved to my favorite smile. "Ready to go, Edward?"

"Yeah. Let me just finish my thought for this education paper," he said.

"Educational philosophy?" I asked.

"Yep. I have an outline done. I'm working on the introduction right now," he said. "I'll probably bring my laptop and work on it while you're with Dr. Lunes."

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I nodded and went to grab my black and white jacket. I looked in the closet and frowned. "Edward? Where's my black and white coat?"

"You wore that when you went to Super Target," Edward said warily.

My mind was assaulted with flashes of what happened. I began to tremble and Edward was by my side in a flash. He pulled me to his chest, laying my ear against his heart. I clutched his soft sweater and tried to get the memories to stop. Edward breathed deeply, rubbing my back, and humming in my ear. After a few moments, my mind calmed down and I pulled away. "Better?"

"Manageable," I replied, tucking a hair behind my ear.

"Here, wear this one," Edward said. He pulled out the leather jacket that I had swiped when we first started dating. I put my arms into the long sleeves and buttoned it. Edward took out his blue scarf and wrapped it around my neck. He picked up his black pea coat and put it over his shoulders. "We need to drop Rose and Alice back off at Rathburn before we go to the police station."

I nodded and headed toward the door. Rose and Alice gathered their bags and we all headed down to the parking garage. I looked expectantly for the Volvo, but realized that the Volvo was no more. We all got into the large Land Rover and Edward eased the huge car out of the spot. We drove to Rathburn and Alice and Rose hopped out. They waved as they walked up the sidewalk to their dorm and Edward pulled away. "Are you ready for...?"

"No. But I need the closure," I mumbled.

Edward pulled the Land Rover into a visitor's spot in the police station. I tensed up as we pulled in. Edward turned off the car and looked at me. I took a few breaths, closing my eyes. Edward caressed my cheek and kissed my temple. "I'll be with you every step of the way, beautiful. I promise you."

"I know," I whispered. "Let's go." I opened the door and slid out of the car. Edward moved almost inhumanly fast to get to my side. He wrapped his arm around my waist and led me into the police station. We walked together to the

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receptionist and told him why we were here. He called one of the detectives. We sat down in the stiff chairs and waited for someone to come to us.

Detective Raisor appeared. Her face was in a smile. "Bella and Edward, I'm so happy to see you. How are you feeling Bella?" she asked kindly.

"I'm sore, but getting stronger every day," I said.

"Edward spoke to me this morning and he said that you wanted to see your vehicle?" she asked.

"Yeah. I need to see the damage so I can finally come to grips that Jacob is gone," I replied, squeezing Edward's waist.

"That's completely understandable. It's in the garage. This way," she said gesturing to her right. She led us down a long hallway to a large cavernous room. She punched in some numbers into a keypad and the door unlocked. She ushered us through and we were led into the garage of the police station. There was one bank of lights on near the rear of the room. I could only see the Volvo in shadow. I leaned against Edward and steeled myself for the inevitable onslaught of memories and pain.

Detective Raisor turned on the light and the whole garage was bathed in the harsh fluorescent lighting. Edward's car, which was so sleek, was a mangled piece of metal. I gasped when I saw it. Edward tightened his hold on me, humming quietly in my ear. I wiggled my way out of Edward's comforting embrace and moved to the car. I walked to what used to be the driver's side and inspected the damage. I saw a large amount of dried blood on the seat and floor of the car. "Is there any way that he could have survived?"

"No, Bella. He was killed on impact. He never stood a chance," Detective Raisor.

"Are you sure?"

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"Positive. Bella, he's gone," Detective Raisor said as she laid her hand on my arm. "He was decapitated and the steering column crushed his chest. No one could have survived that."

"Has anyone claimed his body?" I whispered.

"His father came out and identified him. He asked that he would be cremated. He didn't take the ashes," Detective Raisor said quietly. "We disposed of them."

"So, he's really gone. Jacob is never going to hurt me, ever again?" I asked her.

"No, Bella. He can never hurt you. Does this help to see the car wreckage?" she asked.

"It finally has made it real. The ultimate closure would have been to see Jacob on a slab, but that's been handled," I said as I ran my hand along the cold metal of the destroyed Volvo.

I turned and looked at Edward. He had a pained expression on his face.

"Detective Raisor, can you give us a moment?" he asked, barely above a whisper.

"Of course, Edward. I'll be waiting at the reception desk. I'll gather your phone and purse and you can sign for them. You are free to go after that," she said as she patted my arm. "I wish you the best of luck."

"Thank you, Detective."

Detective Raisor left the garage and Edward moved toward me. He gathered me in his arms and held onto me tightly. "Bella, how can you be so calm?" he whispered, his voice in agony.

"I needed to do this, Edward. I needed to know that he was truly gone. That Jacob is dead," I explained.

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Edward pulled away and looked into my eyes. "You're just too calm. It's worrying me. I'm waiting for the other shoe to fall," he said.

"Do you want me to cry in hysterics? Do you want me to take a crowbar and beat the shit out of a mangled car? Do you want me to completely lose my mind?" I seethed, pushing away from him.

"I want some kind of reaction," Edward said, keeping his distance.

"Let it sink in and then you'll get your fucking reaction, Edward," I fumed, stomping past him. "I have an appointment to get to and I need my insurance card. Let's go."

I walked down the long hallway and greeted Detective Raisor. She handed me a large brown bag. I looked inside and there was my purse and phone. I signed the clipboard that she extended and I took the purse and phone out of the bag. I checked my phone. The battery was dead, but appeared to be fine. Edward was walking slowly back up the hallway, his head down. I knew I shouldn't have snapped at him, but I didn't feel anything. No relief. No anger. Nothing when I saw the car. No feelings. Is that normal?

I turned on my heel and walked toward the door after I said my goodbyes to Detective Raisor. She wished me luck again and gave me a hug. Edward opened the passenger side of the SUV and helped me up, not saying a word. I leaned against the car door, looking out the window. I laid the directions that Dr. Lunes had given me on the center console. Edward picked them up and he drove us in silence to the clinic. It was a comfortable silence. It was filled with tension.

We arrived at a generic medical building. Edward turned off the car. Before he could speak, I got out of the car. I couldn't deal with this. Not now. I walked into the building and looked at the directory. I located Dr. Lunes and Ridge Clinical Services. They were on the third floor. I walked to the elevator and waited for it to come. Edward caught up with me and kept his distance. He had his messenger bag with him and he was fiddling with his cell phone. The elevator arrived and I hit the three button with more gusto than needed. We

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arrived at the floor and walked to the Dr. Lunes' office. I checked in with the receptionist. She asked me to fill out some paperwork. I was having a hard time concentrating as I was writing, but got through the paperwork. Edward was working on his laptop, not really acknowledging me.

"Isabella Swan?" called a young, Hispanic woman.

"That's me," I said nervously.

"I'm Dr. Stephenie Lunes. Come with me into my office," she said kindly. "Is it just you?"

"No, my fiancé is here with me, but we're not talking at the moment," I mumbled.

"Oh, I'm sorry. Would like him to join us or do you want to just talk with me?" she asked.

"Let's start with just the two of us and maybe call in my fiancé about halfway?" I suggested.

"Sounds like a good compromise, Isabella," she smiled.

"Bella. Just Bella. Isabella makes me feel like I'm in trouble," I teased.

"Got it, Bella. Now, tell me why did you call me?" she asked, pulling out a pad of paper.

"I was in an emotionally and somewhat physically abusive relationship," I whispered.

"I take it that it's not with your fiancé?"

"No. Edward is awesome. He's been my savior. Jacob was my abuser," I clarified.

"Okay, tell me about Jacob," she said.

I told her my story. I told her about how Jacob began as sweet and loving. I told her how his actions became controlling and his words became hurtful. I then told her about his threats over the first semester and his abduction of me over Christmas break. I finally, after several deep breaths, told her about what happened less than a week ago.

"Bella, we're going to discuss your abuse, but I want to bring Edward into the session. He may be an integral part of your healing process. You obviously trust him since you've agreed to marry him. I'm going to get him. Is that alright with you?"

"That's fine. However, I think he's pissed at me," I replied.

"Why is that?"

"Before we came here, we went to the police station to pick up my purse and phone. I asked the detective who was in charge of my case to show me the car that I was in when Jacob was killed. I expected to feel something, but I felt nothing. Edward expected a reaction and was almost disturbed when I didn't have one," I explained.

"We'll talk about that at our next session. It's concerning to me, too. However, I want to work with the trust that you have with Edward and use it positively. I'll be back momentarily," she said kindly. She got up from her chair and went to the waiting room. I curled my legs underneath me. I nibbled on my bottom lip, fidgeting nervously with some lint on my jeans. I heard Dr. Lunes and Edward talking as they were walking down the hall. I dropped my head, hiding behind my hair. Edward walked in and sat down on the couch, next to me. He reached over and gently grasped my knee, drawing circles on the bottom of my thigh.

"So, Edward, Bella has told me about her relationship with Jacob. I want you tell me about your relationship with Bella," Dr. Lunes instructed.



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I took a hesitant look at him and he smiled at me. "Bella has completed my life in ways I never thought possible, Dr. Lunes. She has filled the void in my heart from when my mom passed away when I was nine from ovarian cancer," Edward said as he laced his fingers through mine. "However, she's been through so much. It's scaring me. Her reaction to all of this."

"That's understandable, Edward. How did you and Bella meet?"

"At Emerson. She was my sister's roommate," Edward explained.

"Was?"

"Due to a situation with Jacob, Bella and I moved into an apartment off campus. He had broke into their dorm room and completely trashed it," Edward said, his anger evident. "My sister, Alice and their other roommate, Rosalie, moved into a different dorm before Christmas break."

"Did you both start dating at the beginning of the school year?"

"Yeah. We've been together since that first night on campus. I knew it when we touched, when we were together, when we were performing, that we would be together," Edward said wistfully.

"Bella, do you feel the same way about Edward that he feels about you?" Dr. Lunes asked.

"Very much so. I just feel so guilty for causing him so much pain with my drama," I said. "He's restored my faith in love. I thought I lost it with Jacob. I was content to spend the rest of my life alone after what Jacob did to me."

"How old are you, Bella?"

"I just turned nineteen in September," I replied.

"Isn't that a little young to give up on love?" she asked.

## La Cantante

"In dealing with Jacob, I was resigned to be alone because Jacob had broken me," I explained.

"What did Edward do that restored your faith in love?" Dr. Lunes pressed.

"He told me that I was special. That I was smart, beautiful, talented and generous. He told me everything that Jacob never did," I sniffled. "He made me feel those things as well. His actions were always sincere, almost reverent."

"Bella that's because you are all those things, if not more. I knew I loved you from the moment I saw you," Edward said, as he cupped my chin.

"Before you go, Bella, why did you not have a reaction to the car at the police station?" Dr. Lunes asked.

"I don't know. It pissed me off, something awful that I didn't have a reaction. I should have some sort of *feeling*, right? Elation? Fear? *Something*?" I squeaked.

"Let me rephrase. How do you feel about Jacob being dead?" Dr. Lunes countered.

"I don't know yet. I still think that he's going to pop up somewhere and kill me. We thought he was dead before and he wasn't. I thought seeing the car and the damage would solidify the reality of it. You know? But I still am fearful that he's going to come and get me," I answered honestly. I pinched my nose, a habit I picked up from Edward. "I don't want to be afraid anymore. I want to live my life."

"That's an admirable goal, Bella. You can do it. With your support system in Edward and your family, you will be able to do it. I know that you are healing from your ordeal, however I'm going to give you some homework before our next session. It may sound trivial but it'll help you sort out your feelings. Write a letter to Jacob and tell him in your letter how he made you feel. What he did to you. We'll discuss your feelings about your letter the next time I see you. How does that sound?" Dr Lunes offered.

## La Cantante

"I'll try. I'm still having a great deal of difficulty concentrating, especially when I'm reading or writing. I'm actually not going to classes this week until I get cleared by Dr. Cullen," I explained.

"Do what you can," Dr. Lunes compromised. "Can you come next week at the same time?"

I looked at Edward. He nodded. "That's fine. Will we be meeting here?"

"Yes, Bella. I always have Mondays at this satellite office," she said kindly. "Why did you look at Edward?"

"He's my ride," I explained.

"Okay. Not to disrespect you Edward, but I don't Bella to fall into another controlling relationship," Dr. Lunes clarified.

"Bella is free to do what she wants," Edward said, almost defensively. "I don't want to control her in anyway. She is an independent woman, capable of making her own decisions. I'm just the chauffeur."

"I apologize if I insulted you Edward," she replied. Edward nodded and gave her a smile. "I'll see you next week, Bella. I hope things improve for you. Call me if you ever need anything."

"I will, thank you," I said. I gathered my purse and stood up from the couch. Edward laced his fingers with mine and led me down the hallway. We stopped by the receptionist and informed her of our upcoming appointment. She said that she needed to contact my insurance company in regard to therapy appointments, but would inform me of my payments the next time I came in. I nodded and we headed out to the car.

When we got into the car, Edward gently took my face into his hands. "I'm sorry I lost my temper with you, Bella. I'm a dick and I shouldn't push you," he said, his eyes filled with remorse.

## La Cantante

"Edward, I understand your frustration. I do. I'm just as frustrated. It's my head that's all fucked up. I need you to support me," I said.

"I'll always support you, baby. I'll always love you. I'm so sorry about at the police station. Can you please forgive me?" he asked, as he leaned his head forward.

I nodded and twined my fingers through his hair. "I'm sorry, Edward for everything that I've put you through. I'm surprised that you are still with me," I muttered.

"I'll always want to be with you, Bella. Always," he whispered. He looked at me and ran his fingers across my lips. "Can I kiss you, Bella? Please?"

I nodded and leaned forward. He met me halfway and gently ran his lips across mine. My skin erupted and I needed more. I reluctantly ran my tongue across his bottom lip and he sighed. He ran his fingers through my hair and opened his mouth. My tongue entered and danced languidly with his. My heart was beating erratically in my chest. For the first time since my accident, I felt something other than fear, anger or frustration. I felt Edward's love and my love for him. My breath hitched and Edward pulled away. His lips never left my skin. They gently caressed my neck and jaw. I angled my neck to provide him with easier access. I moaned at his soft lips on my neck. He pulled away and his eyes were darkened with desire. "I love you, Edward."

"I love you, more, Bella. More than you can imagine. You are my life. You will always be my life. We may fight, but my feelings for you will never, ever change. Just know that I will be there for you, no matter what happens," he said as he cupped my face with his warm hands.

"I know, Edward. I'll be there for you, too."

"I don't know about you, but I'm hungry. You want some grease?" he teased.

"McFinnigans?" I said, shooting my brows up.

## La Cantante

"Damn straight," he laughed. Edward started the car and drove the short distance to McFinnigans. We ate a quick, light-hearted meal. I was getting tired and my pain pill was wearing off. My ribs were hurting and I had gotten a headache. After dinner, Edward drove us back to our apartment. He worked on his reading for classes while I lay my head on his lap, snoozing. I felt him pick me up and carry me to our bedroom. He lay down next to me and per usual, I found my way onto his chest, listening to his heartbeat as I fell into a deep sleep, lighter than I've felt in two years.

**A/N: Therapy session done. There will be more. Bella is on her way to healing. Up next is going to be an appointment with Carlisle, a new car and Bella's return to school.**

# Volvo 20

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 64: Volvo 2.0

### EPOV

The rest of the week that Bella was off went by quickly. Her headaches had waned significantly. She still had a nagging ache near her left temple. She also regained most of her concentration and was able to catch up on her reading for her classes. On Friday, after University Singers, I was taking her to Carlisle's office to get her medical clearance to return to classes. Even though he was an oncologist, he was her primary physician through this whole thing and he wanted to make sure she was okay. After our appointment, Carlisle and Esme told me that they would take Bella and I to get me my new car as an early 21st birthday present. I decided that I wanted a Volvo SUV. Something bigger and more secure than my old Volvo.

When I came back from University Singers, Bella was typing on her laptop. Her brows were furrowed. "Bella, we need to be on the road in about an hour," I said as I walked into the apartment.

I sat down next to her and looked over her shoulder. She snapped the laptop shut. She glared at me. "Do you know that it's rude to read over someone's shoulder, Edward," she quipped.

"Sorry, beautiful. What are you working on?" I asked as I kissed her shoulder.

"My letter to Jacob," she said as she opened the laptop back up.

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"I'm sorry, baby. I didn't mean to intrude. I know what you want to say to him is private," I responded.

"I do want you to read it, but not yet. I'm still working on it," she said as she ran her fingers through my hair, massaging my scalp. I leaned into her touch, enjoying the feeling her fingers felt in my hair. I missed her. I wanted to feel her again, but I knew that she wasn't ready. She was conflicted and I could tell that she wanted to move ahead, but she didn't. However, I'd wait for her as long as she wanted. "I'm going to freshen up. I've sent out an email to all of my professors, saying that I was tentatively returning to classes on Monday, pending the results of my appointment today. I'm meeting with Larry after University Singers on Monday to discuss my missing tests. Dr. Hafenrichter finally relented and said he'd modify my tests and let me have extended time, as did our sociology professor. Eleazar told me to not worry about the tests that I missed, but to complete an overview of the time periods that he covered during my absence and turn it in on the final day of class. No longer than three pages, he said. He didn't want to tax me."

"Sounds good, beautiful. I'm going to grab some lunch and then we can go after you are done getting ready," I said, kissing her nose.

"I made grilled cheese. There's some on the plate for you," she said as she got up and walked to the bedroom. I inhaled the grilled cheese and chugged the tomato soup that Bella had made. I went into the pantry and popped in a piece of gum. Bella came out and she was wearing a pair of black jeans with a white blouse and green argyle vest. She looked beautiful. She always looked beautiful. Her bruises were fading and now were a sickly yellow color, but were easily covered by her makeup. She was wearing my black jacket and her boots. Her messenger bag was slung over her shoulder. I picked it up and put on my shoulder, giving her a pointed look. She rolled her eyes. I picked up my mom's keys and our apartment keys and headed down to the parking garage. Bella got into the Land Rover and slipped out her laptop. She was still working on her letter.

I eased the Land Rover out of the parking spot and drove the car to my father's office. I was happy Bella was occupied by the letter because we were driving

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right past the accident scene. When we got closer to the accident location, Bella's posture stiffened and she looked out the window. We both saw it at the same time. The mangled median and skid marks on the road. Bella put her laptop on the floor of the Land Rover and brought her knees up to her chest, laying her head on them. "Baby?"

Bella whimpered and her eyes clamped shut. Her breathing became more and more erratic. I knew I needed to calm her down, but I couldn't pull over. Not here. Anywhere but here. I pressed down on the accelerator trying to move us out of the range of the accident. Bella's breathing was still labored and her eyes were detached, not living. I needed to get her back. I pulled off at the next exit and stopped at McDonalds. I raced out of the car and opened up the passenger side. "Bella, come here, please?" I begged. She was still curled up in a ball, not moving. I gently touched her shoulder and she recoiled from me. "Bella, listen to my voice. It's Edward," I said calmly. "You're safe. Jake won't hurt you. I'll protect you. Please come back to me, beautiful."

Bella uncurled herself and threw herself into my arms. I easily caught her, holding her to my body. She cried against my chest. I ran my fingers through her hair and held her tightly, letting her know that I was not going anywhere. I pressed her face against my heart and she leaned against me. She eventually calmed down. "Better, baby?"

She nodded and wrapped her arms around my waist. "Thank you, Edward." I cupped her chin and forced her to look at me. Her eyes had some spark in them, but still not their usual twinkle. I leaned down and kissed her soft lips. She breathed against my lips and snuggled closer to me.

"Do you need to get something to eat or drink while we're stopped?" I asked.

"No. Let's just get going. I'm sorry, Edward," she mumbled.

"Bella, don't apologize. I'm worried, that's all. I felt so helpless while I was driving past the accident site. I knew I needed to stop but I couldn't stop *there*, you know?" I said, frowning. Bella gave me a smile and kissed my lips. She turned around and got into the car. I got in and eased back onto the highway,



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continuing along the road to the exit to my father's office.

A half hour later, I pulled into a parking spot at my father's medical office. I led Bella into the opulent building. She was in awe of the décor. I checked in with Jackie, the receptionist. She smiled and led me into my father's office, Bella in tow. We sat down on the leather sofa in my father's office. Bella curled up next to me, her head on my shoulder. I laced my fingers with hers, idly playing with her engagement ring. I heard Carlisle outside the door, speaking to one of the nurses. He walked into the office and gave us a smile.

"Edward and Bella, it's so good to see both of you," he said as he got up. Bella stood up and hugged him. I shook his hand after he released Bella. "How are you feeling, Bella?"

"I'm better. I still get really tired and my head hurts a lot when I read for long periods of time," she explained.

"When was the last time you took a pain pill?"

"Wednesday evening?" she responded.

"That's good that you are not using it every day," Carlisle answered. "Edward, do you mind waiting out in the waiting area? I need to examine Bella and discuss some things with her."

"Okay," I said warily. "I'll be outside."

About twenty minutes later, Carlisle poked his head out into the waiting area. Bella was sitting on the couch, adjusting her blouse. "Everything okay, baby?"

"Yeah. Carlisle wanted to check my ribs and also he gave me my shot," she answered. "I had forgotten that I needed it again. If it wasn't for Carlisle's mindfulness, they could have had a grandchild," Bella blushed.

*A baby? With Bella? Yes, please.*

## La Cantante

"Oh," I answered dumbly. "Are you able to come back to classes next week?"

"Yep. However, you get to do the heavy lifting of my book bag," she said as she poked my sides.

"Gladly, beautiful."

"Are you two ready to get Edward a car?" Carlisle asked.

"Yes. Filling up the Land Rover is a nightmare and it goes through gas like it's going out of style," I grumbled.

"Trust me I know. That car is going to bankrupt me," Carlisle laughed. "Esme drove me to work today, so I'll ride with you to the dealership. She'll meet us there."

We walked out of the office as we were Carlisle's last appointment for the day. He set the alarm and we strolled to the Land Rover. Bella got in the passenger seat and Carlisle slipped into the backseat. I drove the car to the Volvo dealership and saw Esme's car in the parking lot. I pulled in next to her and she rushed over to give me a hug. "Hello, Edward. How are you doing, my sweet boy?"

"I'm good, Mom. How are you?" I asked as I kissed her cheek.

"I'm good. How's Bella?"

"I'm fine, Esme," she said as she stepped out of the car. Esme rushed over and gave her a hug. "I've missed you Esme."

"I've missed you too, Bella. You're looking so much better. You have the sparkle in your eyes," she said. Bella smiled and hugged Esme again.

Carlisle tugged on my elbow and we went into the Volvo dealership. Esme and Bella followed us. We were attacked by several salespeople. A young man eventually won our trust and we sat down and discussed what I wanted in my

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new car. We eventually decided on an SUV, an XC90 in silver with black leather interior. As luck would have it, there was a XC90 on the lot in our exact specifications and we decided to get it. The dealership wanted to clean it up so we went out to dinner as they prepared my new car.

We arrived at an American grille and were seated immediately, despite its crowds. I assumed the Carlisle tipped the hostess. She was totally flirting with him and with me when we walked up. We sat down in the booth and looked over our menus. Bella still hadn't recovered her appetite. She was losing a lot of weight and that concerned me. I mentioned to Carlisle and he said that loss of appetite was normal for some people with her type of injury. The waiter took our order and quickly disappeared.

"So, Bella, are you excited about heading back to classes?" Esme asked.

"Yes and no. I'm not looking forward to the amount of work I have to make up, but I'll be glad to get back into a routine. I've missed singing and the music."

"University Singers and Emerson Express have not been the same without you," I said. "Also, Kellan has been calling us about our next gig at Eclipse. I had talked to him after your accident and he said for us to take all the time that we need. However, he called me today and begged for us to play for the Valentine's Day party that they have."

"I should be ready to go by then," Bella said thoughtfully. "I want to thank both of you for taking such good care of me when I had my accident."

"Bella, like I said before, I think of you as my own. I love you, sweetheart," Esme said.

"So do I, Bella. You have become an integral part of the family," Carlisle replied. "Edward told me what happened when your mother came to visit. I'm very sorry for your falling out."

"My mom is very *selfish*. I've had enough of her bullshit. I apologize for my crassness, but I am," Bella bristled. "She has a lot of ground to make up if she

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expects to get an invitation to our wedding."

"Bella, I don't want to overstep my boundaries, but in offering our home, we would also like to pay for the wedding itself," Esme said quietly.

"Esme, that's too generous," Bella floundered.

"Not for my soon-to-be daughter-in-law. Please, let us do this for you and our son," Esme pressed.

Bella looked at me and had tears in her eyes. "It's up to you, beautiful. I'm willing to pay for our wedding," I said as I caressed her cheek.

"Esme, we'd be happy to have you help with the wedding," Bella said diplomatically. Esme smiled and she gave Bella a hug. She winked over her shoulder at me. She'd still pay for the whole thing. I chuckled and winked back.

The waiter delivered our food and we ate our food. Carlisle asked me about my classes. I told him how much I enjoyed the classes I had signed up for and he was genuinely happy for me. After we finished our dinner, Carlisle paid the bill and we drove back to the Volvo dealership. My car was sitting in the front parking lot, a sparkly and sleek. I was actually giddy. Bella giggled at me. I rolled my eyes at her and kissed her cheek, moving my lips down her neck. She melted against my chest and pressed her ass against my crotch, eliciting a growl from me. She reached behind her and palmed my growing arousal, looking over her shoulder coyly. She winked at me and smiled.

*She's coming back. My feisty girl is back.*

Carlisle and I went into the cashier's office and he paid for the car with his black credit card. Even though he paid, my name along with Bella's would be on the title for the car. We signed the paperwork and I was handed a set of keys and I pocketed the other set for Bella. After an hour, we were shown the nuances of the car and we headed back to our apartment. Bella sat in the passenger seat, her eyes closed, but a smile on her face.

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"What are you thinking about, beautiful?" I asked as I reached across the console to lace my fingers with Bella's.

"How wonderful your family is. How wonderful you are. How, despite all of the drama, my life is finally looking up," she said contemplatively. "It's all because of you, Edward. I'm so thankful for you and for everything you've done for me. Thank you, so much."

"Bella, I love you so much. I'm glad that you are in my life," I said quietly.

"Edward, when we get back to our apartment, I want to try," she said quietly.

"Try what, beautiful?"

"I want you to make love to me," she said.

"Bella, your ribs. I've seen your bruises. Let's see where things go, okay?" I offered as a compromise.

She huffed out a breath and wrapped her free arm around her middle. She looked at me and nodded. We sped back home and pulled into the parking garage. I hopped out of the car and helped Bella out of the passenger side. She inhaled before she exited. "Is it weird that I find the 'new car smell' intoxicating?"

"No. I love it," I laughed. "Ready to head upstairs?"

Bella nodded and giggled. I made the decision that Bella's laugh was the best sound in the world. I also decided that it was my goal to make her giggle and laugh as much as possible. We walked to the elevators hand in hand. Once we got into the elevators, Bella looked at me with a wicked gleam in her eyes. She moved toward me, almost like a feline. I moved backward until my back hit the wall of the elevator. "I've missed you, Edward."

"Baby, I haven't gone anywhere," I replied, knowing that was *not* what she meant. She quirked a brow and ran her hands up and down my chest. She

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licked her lips and looked at me, her eyes hooded in lust and desire. I missed that look in her eyes. However, I knew that she shouldn't do this. "Bella, I know you want me to make love to you, but I don't want hurt you."

"Edward, please," she begged. The elevator opened to our floor. I gently tugged on Bella's hand pulling her from the elevator. She followed, her face turned down into a frown. I unlocked the door and held it open for her. She slinked by, head still downward.

"Bella," I said after I shut the door. She was hanging up her coat and not really acknowledging me. "Like I said in the car, let's see where things go. I don't want to push you. You may think you're ready physically, but emotionally you may not be."

"I get it, Edward," she said despondently.

"Baby, I am, in no way, rejecting you."

"Sure, sounds like it to me. Why would you want to be with me anyway? I'm a mess," she said as she moved toward the bedroom.

"Bella let me make one thing abundantly clear. I always want you. You are the single most sexy, intriguing, alluring, exquisite woman I've ever met. I want to be buried so far deep inside you, I can't see straight, but I don't want to hurt you," I said, bending down so I could look into her eyes. She finally met my gaze and she nodded. I gently caressed her cheeks and lifted her chin. I pressed a kiss to her soft lips. Her mouth moved with mine and it quickly became heated. Her tongue traced my lower lip, asking for entrance. I eagerly gave it to her. Her tiny hands moved to my hair, tugging on my coppery locks. I bent down and curved my arm beneath her legs and behind her back. I picked her up easily, a little too easily, and carried her to the bedroom. We never broke our kiss as I strode to our bedroom.

I placed her onto the bed and crawled in next to her after I removed my glasses. I made sure so she was laying on her right side as her left was the side that was bruised. I pulled her close to me, wedging my leg between hers. She moved her

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leg over my hip and grinded against my growing erection. I moaned and she smiled against my lips. "I missed that, Edward."

"Believe me, he misses you, too," I mumbled against her skin. I pressed kisses along her jaw and moved to her earlobe, pulling it between my teeth. She hissed and moved closer to me. I licked along her neck and I could feel her respond. Her core was rubbing against my cock and she was hot. Very hot. I pulled away and gazed into her deep brown eyes. "I love you, baby. Please don't think that I don't."

"I know, Edward. I love you, too." She reached up and began unbuttoning my shirt. She leaned forward and kissed each inch of new skin that she unveiled. Bella quickly divested me of my button-down and threw it onto the floor. She pushed me onto my back and kissed my collarbones, nibbling along the sensitive skin there. She ran her soft fingers through my chest hair and my happy trail. My muscles contracted at her tender caresses. However, this was not about me. It needed to be about her.

I reached to her vest and pulled it off her. I looked down at her and her breath was heavy and her eyes were black with desire. I slowly unbuttoned her blouse, revealing her simple white bra underneath. I removed her blouse and tossed it with my shirt. "So beautiful." I leaned her back and kissed the swell of her breasts. She arched back and cried out in pain. "Baby?"

"I moved funny and it hurt. I can't arch my back. I hate to admit but you're right about making love," she said sheepishly.

"Listen to me. I used to be a premed major. If it's broken, don't do stuff that'll make it worse," I teased as I kissed down her belly. I looked at her bruises and kissed each one of them "It's only temporary. When you're healed, I plan on making you scream in seventeen different languages, baby."

"I look forward to it, Edward," she breathed. I reached the top of her jeans and I unbuttoned the button and slowly eased down the zipper. I then moved to her boots, which were still on her feet. I eased them off her feet and then moved her jeans over her hips. I pulled off her socks and began sucking her toes.

"Edward!" she squealed. "That tickles." I winked at her and kissed up her legs. She was rubbing her thighs together and I knew what she wanted.

"Do you want to feel good, baby?" I asked as I nibbled along her hipbone. Unable to speak she just nodded. "Promise me you'll let me know if you hurt, okay?" Bella weaved her fingers through my hair and pleaded with me in her eyes. I ran my fingers along her legs and thighs. She moaned and fell back into the pillows. I smiled against her skin and pulled her panties down her legs. I positioned myself so I was in between her legs. I looked at my girl and she was so turned on. Her pussy was glistening. I wanted to whip off my pants and plunge my cock into her, but I knew I couldn't. I leaned forward and nuzzled my nose against her. I inhaled her musky scent and I grew harder in my jeans. With one of my hands, I spread her lips and I licked the length of her slit.

"Oh, Edward," she moaned. I looked up at her and she locked her eyes with mine. I arched a brow and licked her again. She tasted so good. So sweet. So perfect. I flicked my tongue in and out of her entrance and she moved her hips. I smiled against her warm moist skin, happy that I could make her feel good. I swirled my tongue around her clit and she became more aroused. I hummed in approval and she bucked her hips at the sensation. With my other hand, I ran my finger along her slick wet folds. She continued to moan and move with my hand and tongue.

"Feel good, baby?" I asked as I kissed her inner thigh. Her response was her fingers weaving into my hair and pushing my face back between her legs. I chuckled and swirled my tongue again over her clit. I slowly moved my finger into her and her muscles began to clench. She was just as horny as I was and close to her release. I slowly moved my finger in and out of her tight pussy. I was aching to be inside her and my own hips moved on the bed. I added another finger and moved my tongue faster along her clit. Bella raised her arms above her head and she was breathing heavily. Her hips were gyrating and it was fucking hot. I flipped my hand over and curled my fingers, hitting that sweet spot that made her come. She yelped and looked down at me. My eyes never left hers as I continued pleasuring her with my mouth.



"Edward, it feels amazing. Don't stop," she breathed. I smiled and pulled her clit between my teeth and flicked it with my tongue and adding a third finger to her pussy. I felt a coil in my own belly as I was getting close to my own release as I watched Bella become unraveled. I didn't particularly like the idea of jizzing in my pants, but I was fucking turned on.

I pumped my hand into Bella and her body began to respond to my ministrations. Her muscles were beginning to clench around my fingers. I removed my mouth from her clit. "Let it go, baby. Enjoy it. Come for me, Bella," I whispered, keeping my lips close to her core. I pulled her clit into my teeth and nibbled, curling my fingers in her body. I moved my pinky to her other entrance and gently caressed there. Bella's muscles clamped down on my fingers and she came hard and fast, leaking down my hand. I eagerly lapped up all she had to offer and realized that she had done something that I never thought I'd ever see. She came so hard that she 'squirted.' When I came to that conclusion, I reached my own release and came in my pants. I pressed gentle kisses along her core, her inner thighs and moved up her body, hovering over her with mine, careful not to put any weight on her. I looked at her reverently and kissed her lips. "You are amazing, Bella."

"That would be you, Edward. I've never felt like that, ever," she breathed.

"Your orgasm was quite intense, beautiful. One I will not forget any time soon," I said as I kissed her again. "I'm going to hop in the shower as your intense orgasm caused me to jizz in my pants." I wrinkled my nose and she giggled.

"What was so 'intense' about my orgasm, Edward?" she asked.

"You did something that I only saw in porn and I thought I'd never see in real life," I said. She looked at me with her brows raised. "I'm going to leave it at that. I don't want you to be embarrassed."

"Too late for that," she said.

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"Baby, let's just say, you are the hottest fucking creature on the planet and I'm lucky to have you. However, I'm sticky and I need to get out of these jeans," I said. I rolled away and walked stiffly to bathroom. Bella fell back onto the pillows and covered her face with one. I took a quick shower and threw my clothes into the hamper. I then went and put them into the washing machine so it wouldn't stain. I grabbed a fresh pair of boxers and slid into the bed with Bella. She had curled up under the covers, but didn't bother to get dressed. She rolled over and laid her head against my chest, right over my heart. She had removed her bra and was delightfully naked laying next to me. "I love you, beautiful."

"I love you, too, Edward," she said sleepily. She yawned and pressed a kiss on my swan and fell asleep quickly. I held her against my chest and kissed her forehead. My own eyes drifted and I fell asleep.

**A/N: Okay, I wanted Bella's return to school to be in her point of view. However, I did give you some juicy (I really mean juicy) citrus. Light and fluffy are coming next. Gotta love light and fluffy. Leave some love.**

# Closure and Healing

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 65: Closure and Healing

### BPOV

Edward was very cryptic after his explorations south of the border on Friday. However, he seemed very pleased with himself for what he did. He made me feel amazing when we got home from picking up his new car. I thought I was going to explode with desire and pleasure with what he was doing with his fingers and his tongue. If he does it again, I'll be one happy woman.

On Saturday, I managed to finish my letter to Jacob. I saved it on my laptop and printed it out. I gave it to Edward to read. It was honestly one of the most difficult things for me to do. In my letter I told him everything I wanted to say to his face. Everything he ever did to me and how it hurt me.

*Dear Jacob,*

*While I start this letter with 'dear,' you are not 'dear' to me. You are a hateful, spiteful human being and you got what you deserved.*

*For the past two years of my life, you've made it a living hell. While we were together, you started as this sweet, caring boyfriend. However, that changed. I don't know what happened that made you change from this sweet, caring boyfriend to this hateful, sadistic monster, but you did. Jacob, you hurt me more than you could ever imagine. You made my life exponentially more difficult as I was very leery about new relationships and friendships because of your control issues. You made me distrustful of people and made me feel like*

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*complete and total shit. Your words broke me down, Jacob. They made me feel like I was nothing. Eventually, I believed it. That's when you gained your ultimate power. That night, though, when you tried to rape me, I fought back. I know now that I should have pressed charges against you. I was too afraid. I'm not afraid now. You know what they say about hindsight. It's 20/20.*

*What really pisses me off is what you did to me and Edward. Edward is my life. He's my other half. My soul mate. You almost took me away from him. Twice. The first time when you took me at the grocery store in Forks. The second time when you took me at Super Target near Emerson. You hurt me physically in both instances, but the physical scars will heal. It's the emotional ones that will take time. The emotional scars that Edward and I have to endure because of you are the toughest ones to overcome. I've had nightmares, night terrors and waking flashbacks of our ordeals. I've physically and emotionally hurt Edward because of you, Jacob. I fucking hate you for it.*

*Edward is a good man. A kind man. A loving man. He's the one I gave my heart to. He's the one I gave my soul to. He's the one I love more than my own life. Not you. It'll never be you. Edward, while physically smaller than you, is a hundred times the man you would ever be.*

*You know what the saddest thing is Jacob? I saw the potential in you. While we could have never made it as a couple, you could have been something special. However, this sick, twisted obsession you had with me took that potential away. I'm not sad that you're gone. I'm happy and grateful because you will never torment me. You will never torment Edward. You will never torment my family. Ever again.*

*I hope you are burning in hell, Jacob. That's where you belong.*

*Bella*

I drafted several different versions of the letter, but this was the most precise letter I could come up with. Edward read the letter and he gave me a triumphant smile. After I had him read it, I felt amazing. I could feel my body become lighter and the tension leave my shoulders. Jacob, while a part of my

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life, will no longer have any control over me.

Edward kissed me fervently after reading the letter for a second time and he said that he was so proud of me. I was proud of myself. I called my dad and read him the letter and his reaction was the same as Edward's: pride. I couldn't wait until I could share this with Dr. Lunes.

xx LC xx

On Monday, the alarm went off and both Edward and I groaned. It was my first day back in class and I wanted to go, but I didn't want to get up. I burrowed deeper against Edward's chest. He chuckled and got out of bed. I had showered the night before and fixed my hair before going to bed. I had been given a straightener by Alice and decided to use it last night. I rolled out of bed and padded to the closet. I picked out a pair of black corduroy pants and a black and red sweater. I plucked out a black bra and slipped it over my shoulders. I still had some difficulties putting the bras on, but it was getting easier.

I got dressed and went into the kitchen to get some breakfast. I wasn't hungry, though I didn't have much an appetite in general since my accident. I could tell that Edward was not happy with my lack of appetite, as my clothes were beginning to get big on me. I ate a bagel and some juice as Edward showered and shaved. I made some coffee for Edward and put it into his travel mug and toasted a bagel for him. I spread some cream cheese onto it and brought it into the bedroom.

When Edward exited the bathroom, I was putting on my jewelry. I put on my Cullen crest along with my promise ring, engagement ring and a pair of chunky silver hoops. I pointed on the dresser where Edward's breakfast lay as I went into the bathroom to brush my teeth and put on my makeup. I popped in my contacts. I covered the bruises on my face and put some eye shadow and lip gloss on. I walked out of the bathroom and Edward was sitting on the bed, eating his bagel, watching the news.

"We're going to get another big snowstorm, baby," he said.

"Oh, goody," I said dryly.

"Not a big fan of the snow?" he teased.

"Hell no. I'll take the rain of Seattle, any day," I retorted.

"Are you ready for today?" Edward asked as he picked up a lock of my hair.

"Kind of?" I replied, giving him a half smile. "I want to be in classes, but I'm freaking out over the work I need to make up. I know my professors are going to work with me, but it's still daunting."

"You did a good chunk of the reading last week. That's a majority of the battle. I have my notes which I've copied for you and all you need to do is retake two tests. One in psychology and one in sociology," Edward replied.

"Thank you for the notes, by the way. You are quite meticulous and *neat* in your note-taking," I quipped.

"Neat?"

"Edward, your handwriting is near perfection. It makes my scrawl look like a kindergartner's writing," I said, rolling my eyes.

"Bella, your handwriting is perfectly fine. Believe me; my handwriting can turn into chicken scratch. It happens more often than not in psychology. Hafenrichter is a speed demon while he talks," Edward laughed. He looked down at his watch and grimaced. "We got to go, baby."

"Yeah, yeah," I grumbled. I went into the office and prepared my messenger bag. Edward, who had put on his jacket, picked it up and slung it over his shoulders along with his own bag. In his hands, he held his leather jacket and held it up for me to put on. I slipped my arms through the sleeves and buttoned it up. I grabbed Edward's blue scarf and wrapped it around my neck and nodded. He laced his fingers with mine and led me down to the parking garage. We got into his shiny, sleek new car and drove to campus. Edward had picked

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up a commuter sticker for his new car over the weekend and affixed it to his windshield. We parked the car along the street near Brandon, in one of the commuter spots. Edward helped me out of the car and walked up to our music theory classroom. We settled into our usual seats and took out our notes and pencils. Larry walked in and began class. He smiled at me and gave me a nod of acknowledgement. I blushed and waved back. Before we left, Larry reminded me of our meeting after University Singers and I said that I would be there.

Edward and I walked to educational psychology and Dr. Hafenrichter didn't acknowledge me in the slightest, which was fine by me. He gave his lecture and reminded the class about the midterm exam that was coming up at the end of next week. He also distributed an assignment about Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. We needed to create an assessment for each intelligence, based on our major. He said that we could work in partners and Edward and I obviously paired up. Our assessments would be presented to the class in the form of a power point presentation during the last week of classes before spring break, which was in less than six weeks.

After psychology, Edward handed me my notebook and biology textbook along with a pen and pencil. He was adamant that I not carry my messenger bag. I took my books and stuck the pen and pencil into my jacket pocket. Edward gave me a searing kiss before he darted off to education. I walked to the science building and took my seat next to Alice. She gave me a huge wave and bounced in her seat. She then handed me photocopies of her notes and lab notes for me. My biology professor was going to meet with me after class as this was the only time he had available. He gave the notes about different stages of mitosis and released class early. He called me to the front of the room. Alice gave me a smile and waited for me outside the lecture hall.

"How are you doing, Bella?" he asked.

"I'm good, Dr. Haddon. Getting stronger every day," I said with a shy smile.

"I know you have a class, so I'll make this brief. It'll be nearly impossible for you to make up the three labs that you missed while you were out. Our only

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option is for you to do an alternative assignment to make up the points. I've spoken with your doctor and he told me the extent of your injury. For your alternative assignment, you can do one of two things. The first option is to do a research paper on a recent biological discovery, approximately 5-7 pages long, due during finals week. The second option is to retake the class over the summer. I can't pass you if you don't complete the missing labs," he said curtly.

"I'll do the paper, Dr. Haddon. I do have a question about the practical part of the cat dissection lab. Will I be held responsible for the parts that I was absent?" I asked.

"Yes. Your lab partner can brief you on what parts you missed. Ms. Cullen, while very whiney, is a great scientist and took meticulous notes," Dr. Haddon explained.

I chuckled. "Her brother is the same way."

"Ah, yes. Mr. Cullen, I had him as an advisee before he switched majors. It was such a shame. He would have been a fine doctor," Dr. Haddon said.

"Possibly. But it wasn't his passion. Anyhow, thank you for modifying the lab assignments for me. I'll begin working on the paper as soon as I can," I said as I shrugged on my coat. "See you on Wednesday."

"Bye, Bella," he said as he gathered his things, going to his next class. I picked up my books and met up with Alice outside the lecture hall. We walked to Brandon and went into the large rehearsal room. I got my folder and sat down next to Edward, who was reading a paper that was returned to him.

"Whatcha reading, Edward?" I asked as I leaned my head against his shoulder.

"I got my educational philosophy paper back. Dr. Seppela was very complimentary."

"What did you get?"



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"I got an A," he beamed. He handed me the paper and I skimmed through it. He had a really nice writing style that was succinct but descriptive at the same time. We also shared very similar beliefs and philosophies of music education.

"Good job, Edward. You're so smart," I said as I kissed his lips.

"Oh, stop it," he said, blushing. He took my books from my lap and stuffed them into my messenger bag. As he was doing so, Tanya had sauntered in. Her eyes widened as she saw me. She gave me an evil stare as she took her seat near the back of the room. I glared at her and I didn't want to deal with her today. I growled under my breath. Edward heard me and saw where I was looking. His eyes narrowed and his face looked murderous. Tanya shrank back and took out her music. "She's been spreading rumors about you while you were gone, baby."

"What's she been saying?" I asked.

"That the reason why you were gone was because you had an abortion," he said sadly. "I've told her off, as did most of the choir. Eleazar is working on getting her removed from University Singers, but 'daddy' is making it difficult."

"What a disturbing thing to say. She's such a hateful bitch. Why can't she just disappear?" I seethed. "If I was pregnant with your baby, I would never, ever want to abort it. I'm pro-choice, but it's a choice that I wouldn't make for myself."

Edward looked at me and gave me a radiant smile. "Do you want to have children with me, Bella?"

"Of course, Edward. Adorable little children with your crazy hair and beautiful green eyes," I said, kissing his nose.

"I would pity our children if they had this mess," he said as he ran his hand through his hair.

"I love your sex hair, Edward."

## La Cantante

"Another reason why it would be wrong. Imagine a five year old boy with 'sex hair.' Talk about disturbing," he shuddered. "I can't wait to have babies with you, Bella. We will have to wait because we are way too young, but I want to be the father of your children."

"I can't wait, either, Edward. I love you."

"I love you, too, beautiful," he responded, kissing my lips again.

Eleazar walked in and he began his physical warm ups. We stretched our bodies. I bowed out of the massages, not wanting my body to hurt. I know that Edward would be gentle with his massage, but I was still leery of other people touching me. Even if it was Rosalie. Eleazar gave me a warm welcome, as did the rest of the University Singers. I blushed and hid behind Edward's shoulder. Eleazar ran rehearsal and spent most of the time reviewing what they had learned so far. I was able to sight read the stuff that I was not familiar with pretty easily, but my perfect pitch ability aided me with that.

At the conclusion of rehearsal, Eleazar called Tanya to the piano and dismissed the rest of us. Edward and I dawdled as we were putting our coats and scarves on. We wanted to hear what Eleazar was going to say to Tanya. However, he waited until everyone was out before he shut the door. Edward and I shared a look. We waited for as long as we could before I had to go to my meeting with Larry. As we were walking down the stairs, we heard the choir room door fly open and a bawling Tanya came running out. She ran past Edward and me, knocking me into the wall. My ribs felt like they were on fire, the pain was so intense. I gasped and Edward quickly caught me before I fell further.

"Bella?" he asked, his face panicked. I latched my fingers to his arms and breathed through the pain. "Baby? Are you okay?"

I held up one finger, asking for a moment. The pain subsided, slightly and I was able to answer him. "She pushed me into the wall and knocked me on the wrong side," I whispered.

Edward's eyes narrowed and he growled. "That fucking bitch," he seethed.

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"Edward, don't. She's not worth it. If I was healthy, you wouldn't be so pissed," I reasoned, pressing my hand to his cheek. Edward's eyes were still flashing with anger and he was breathing heavily. "Edward, please." I lifted my other hand and cupped his handsome, chiseled face. He leaned into my touch and pressed his forehead against mine.

"When will it stop?" he asked, his voice sounding tortured.

"It already has, Edward. She's not worth it. She's a petty, spiteful, vindictive bitch who feels it necessary to spread rumors about people to make herself feel good. We know that the rumors aren't true and if I was pregnant with your baby, I'd be screaming it from the rooftops, I'd be so proud. Fuck her," I said dismissively. "She's not worth the energy."

Edward cracked open his eyes and looked at me through his glasses, his eyes a deep, rich shade of green. "Who are you and what have you done with my fiancée?"

"What do you mean, Edward?"

"You are so calm and before you get mad, it's not a bad thing. If this happened before, you would have been a mess. Now, you're calming me down?" he said, flabbergasted.

"Am I pissed that she spread rumors about me? Yes. Do I care? Hell, no! Am I going to let one person ruin me? Definitely not. I let Jacob's obsession rule my life for two years and I need to let stuff like that go," I said, caressing his cheeks.

"Ah, Ms. Swan and Mr. Cullen, just the people I want to see. Is everything alright?" Eleazar asked warmly.

"Tanya bumped into Bella as she left the choir room, pushing her into the wall," Edward responded.

"Are you alright, Bella?" Eleazar asked his face full of concern.

## La Cantante

"It hurts but nothing I can't handle," I said as I winced a bit. "Tanya was very upset when she left."

"She should be. I worked with Dean Aro Volturi and got her removed from the choral program at Emerson. She's no longer welcome at University Singers or Concert Choir. Her behavior was abhorrent. Even if the things she was saying were true, it was certainly not her place to do it. She is also receiving a failing grade on her report card and she cannot drop the class. It will greatly affect her GPA," Eleazar explained. "I just wanted to inform you that she will not be bothering you anymore."

"Thank you, Eleazar. I appreciate all you've done," I said. "Also, while I have you, you covered the Renaissance and Baroque periods during my absence in music literature?"

"That's correct, Bella. A brief paper outlining the musical achievements of those two eras will be what you need to make up the points for the exam you missed. No more than three pages," he said as he winked.

"I'm almost done and I'll give it to you by no later than Thursday," I said.

"Excellent, Bella. It's so good to have you back. We've missed you. Edward's missed his partner in crime. I had a combined sectional last week with the tenors and sopranos. He ran the sectional himself and..."

"I sucked. I totally floundered. I got through it, but I couldn't demonstrate the soprano part and yeah. I missed you, baby. We make an awesome team and I can't wait to work with you like that, again," Edward said.

"As much as I want to chat with you, Eleazar. I have a meeting with Larry about music theory," I said, pulling on Edward's arm.

"Of course, Bella. I'll see you tomorrow. You didn't suck, Edward. You and Bella are just an 'awesome team,'" Eleazar said. He turned and walked to his office while Edward and I went down to Larry's office.

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I knocked on the door and Victoria opened it. She scowled at me and turned her attention to Edward. She slinked over to him and rested her hand on his shoulder. Edward wrapped his arm around my waist possessively and gave her a tight smile. "I'm here to see Larry?" I said, trying to contain my anger.

*Don't make me rip your fingers off, Red.*

"Bella, right? I wouldn't really know, you've been absent a lot," she said in a sweet, baby voice.

"Yeah, that's why I'm here. To discuss my make up work," I said.

"He's in his office," she replied. She turned her ice blue eyes to Edward, fluttering her lashes. "Do you want to join me for lunch, Edward? I forgot to pack one and it would be nice to have some company at The Cage."

"I'm going to wait for my *fiancée*," Edward said, emphasizing the word fiancée and kissing my temple. "So, no thanks."

"Are you sure?" Victoria pressed, moving closer to Edward, and pressing her breasts together to create more cleavage.

"Quite," Edward said curtly.

"Edward, I'm sure that Larry wouldn't mind if you come in with me," I said, wanting to get him away from Victoria.

"Great. Let's go, baby," he said, dragging me into Larry's office. We knocked on the office door inside the tiny room. We heard a muffled reply and we moved into the cramped office.

"Hello, Edward and Bella. Is everything alright? You both seem a little 'ruffled,'" Larry asked.

"Victoria is quite forward," Edward said as he shuddered.

## La Cantante

"She is, but she's great assistant. A million times better than James. Did she do something to you, Edward?"

"Just made me feel uncomfortable. I'll be fine, Larry. Do you mind if I sit in on your meeting with Bella?" Edward asked with a smirk.

"No, that's fine. Is that okay with you, Bella?"

"It's cool," I said, pinching his side. "So, what's the plan for my make up work?" Edward and I sat down on the leather sofa in Larry's office.

"The assignments and the one project you missed will need to be turned in by midterm which is right before spring break. That give you about six weeks to do the work. In regard to the tests, we'll have to schedule those at a later date. However, they also need to be completed by midterm as well. I have no worries about you completing the work. You are a hard worker and very dedicated. However, how are you feeling?"

"I'm getting better. I'm exhausted right now, but this is the most I've done in about a week and a half," I said.

"Well, I won't keep you. It's good to have you back, Bella. You are a teacher's dream," Larry said, with a smile.

"Thanks, Larry. I'll see you bright and early tomorrow," I replied as I got up from the leather couch and held out my hand. Larry shook it and gave me another smile.

"See you tomorrow, Edward and Bella," Larry replied.

Edward and I walked out of Larry's office. Victoria was gone, thankfully. Edward and I walked to his car and we got in. Edward drove us to Baci's and I gave him a questioning look. He smiled and parked the car. He led me to the entrance and we were quickly seated in a booth. Edward sat across from me and I just stared at his beautiful face.

## La Cantante

"Edward, why are we here?" I asked.

"I wanted to take my beautiful fiancée out for some lunch before your appointment," Edward replied as he sipped his water. "I'm so proud of you, beautiful. You did so well today."

"Thanks, Edward. I couldn't do this without you," I said as I linked my fingers with his. "Can you believe that this is where it all began?"

"No. It seems like so long ago," Edward mused. "While we've had our bumps along the way, I wouldn't change anything in our relationship, at all. Bella, you are the light in my life and I know that you have a long way to go in your therapy; I've seen a change in how you are acting and reacting to adverse situations. I'm so lucky to have you in my life. I love you, beautiful."

"I love you, too, Edward. I'm blessed to have you in my life and like you, wouldn't change a thing about our relationship. Well, I'd change one thing. I'd change my emotional roller coaster and taking things out on you. You are such an amazing man and you have the patience of a saint to deal with my drama," I replied. I gave him a shy smile.

"Thank you for your apology. While I understand why you lashed out at me, I appreciate the apology," Edward replied. He got up and moved to sit next to me. "I'm too far away from you, beautiful."

I rolled my eyes and the waitress came up to us. She looked at us, both sitting on the same side of booth, like we were crazy. "Welcome to Baci's. What can I get for you today?"

"I'll have the mushroom ravioli and a diet coke, please," I said without looking at the menu.

"I'll have the same, but a regular coke," Edward said with a crooked smirk.

"Would like some breadsticks and minestrone soup?"

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"That sounds good," Edward agreed.

"One bowl or two?" the waitress asked.

Edward looked at me and I shook my head. "Just one, please. Thank you."

The waitress scuttled off and entered our order into the computer. Edward laced his fingers with mine and stared into my eyes. "You are so incredibly beautiful, Bella. I can't believe that I get to keep you."

"Edward, stop it. You're making blush," I said as my cheeks heated up.

"Baby, I love you so much. I hope you know that," Edward said as he cupped my cheeks. I looked up at his forest green eyes and gently reached up to brush a wayward lock of hair off his forehead. The jolt of energy that I felt with him was still there, more intensified as I ran my fingers down his cheek. His eyes fluttered closed and he breathed deeply. "That feels amazing, Bella. You can make me feel so good, so comforted, with one touch, one caress. I'm home when I'm with you."

"I feel the same way, Edward," I said as brushed my lips against his. I sighed into his soft mouth. His tongue traced my lower lip, asking for entrance, which I gave. In this one kiss, I could feel his love for me and it was a soothing balm to my soul, my heart and my mind. Our bubble was interrupted by the waitress clearing her throat with Edward's soup. He caressed my cheek before he directed his attention to the waitress. She was blushing and I knew that she was uncomfortable or turned on by our display of affection. She put the soup down and gave us a smile before scurrying away. Edward picked up his soup spoon and dug into the minestrone. "Would you like some, Bella? It's really good."

"No thanks, Edward. I still don't have much of an appetite," I responded.

"I know, baby. I'm worried about your lack of appetite. You're getting too thin," he said.



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"I know. I just don't want to eat all that much. I'll mention it to Dr. Lunes. Perhaps it is something to do with my head issues, or it's something else," I offered. I picked up a breadstick and nibbled on it. "Happy?"

"A breadstick will not put back all of the weight you've lost back on, Bella," he chastised. "You've lost a good ten pounds, maybe more."

"Would you rather I be a heifer?" I teased.

"Bella, I don't care if you weigh 400 pounds, I would still love you," Edward said with a chuckle.

"I would not love myself. That's just wrong. Trust me, I will never become 400 pounds," I laughed. "However, my mom gained like 75 pounds when she was pregnant with me and Emmett. She's about my size now. Imagine me with 75 pounds in the form of a volleyball in my belly."

"I can't wait," Edward said. He laid his hand on my belly, almost reverently. "It means our child is growing in there and that is amazing."

"I might not like it. Morning sickness, swollen ankles, and a multitude of other things," I shuddered.

"I'll be there for you, every step of the way, Bella. However, let's get married first before we talk babies. As much as I'm giddy at the thought, we need to get through school. Carlisle has finally accepted that I'm a music education major and getting married. If he found out that you were pregnant, he'd kill me. I think the poor guy has aged twenty years in the past four months."

"Was Carlisle not happy when you told him that you were going to propose to me?" I asked.

"No. He mentioned that we were young. However, he also saw how much you changed me and how much in love we were. I've never been one to make irrational decisions. I tend to over think things and analyze my decisions. I knew in my heart that you were it for me and I wanted you to be my wife. It

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was almost an easy decision for me. There was no over thinking or analysis needed. He saw that and accepted. He even loaned me the money to pay for the engagement ring. The money was going to be pulled from my trust fund and wouldn't be cleared until after the first of the year. He told me to use the credit card and he'd use the money to pay off the bill," Edward explained.

"Are you ever going to tell me how much my ring cost?" I asked, almost afraid to know.

"Do you really want to know?" Edward asked as he pushed his soup bowl away from the edge of the table. "I don't mind telling you, but I'm warning you. It's a lot."

"You don't have to tell me the *exact* amount. Just ballpark it?" I smirked.

"It was a five figure number," Edward said.

"Holy shit," I breathed. "Edward, you spent way too much money on me."

"No, I didn't. I could have spent much more. However, you deserve the best," he reasoned, tracing his long, elegant finger along the curve of my jaw. His eyes bore into mine and his face turned up into his signature grin. I gaped at him, blinking in disbelief.

"Here are your raviolis. Can I get you anything else?" our waitress asked.

"No, thank you," I squeaked, still locked in Edward's intense stare.

"Enjoy your, um, meals," she replied.

Edward eyes still held mine. He leaned in and kissed my lips, never closing his eyes. They were still piercing with mine. My lids fluttered closed and I deepened the kiss. He pulled away too soon and handed me my fork. "Dig in, beautiful. We need to finish our meal and head to Dr. Lunes' office."

## La Cantante

I nodded dumbly and took the fork from him. I ate my ravioli, not really tasting it. I was in shock. I was in disbelief. *FIVE FIGURES?* Holy crow! I looked down at my left hand and looked at my engagement ring. It was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen. I watched the lights play in the facets of the diamonds and couldn't believe it. "Bella? Are you done with your lunch?" Edward asked, breaking me from my reverie.

"Um, what?"

"Are you done with your ravioli?" Edward asked, looking at my plate.

"Yeah. Can I get the leftovers wrapped up?" I asked.

"Of course, miss," the waitress replied.

"Can we get the check, too?" Edward asked graciously. She nodded and retrieved a slim black folder from her pocket of her apron. She handed it to Edward and took my plate. She ran off to put my leftovers into a box. Edward opened the folder and took out some cash. He put the cash into the folder and placed it onto the table.

Our waitress returned with my box of food. She gave us both a smile as Edward handed her the folder. "Any change?"

"No, we're good. Thank you," Edward replied. He scooted out of the booth and helped me out as well. He held up my jacket and I eased it over my shoulders. Edward picked up the box of my ravioli and led us out to the car. I got in and we drove to Dr. Lunes' office. Edward walked in with me and we sat in the waiting room. After a few minutes, Dr. Lunes came out. I picked up my messenger bag. Edward grumbled, but I had my letter to Jacob in there. I followed her into her office. I sat down on the couch and took out my letter to Jacob. I held it in my hands, anxious to share it with Dr. Lunes.

"How are you doing today, Bella?" Dr. Lunes asked kindly.

"I'm good. I did my homework," I said with a smile.

## La Cantante

"How did it make you feel to express what Jacob did to you?"

"It felt amazing. After I wrote it. Well, after the final draft, I felt like a ton was taken off my shoulders. My world seemed lighter. I finally said what I should have said to him all those years ago," I beamed.

"You seem different from last week and I think the letter is the beginning," Dr. Lunes responded.

"Do you want to read it?" I asked.

"No, Bella. I had you write the letter for *you*. It is your road to recovery and healing. I can tell that you are proud of what you said and I'm proud that you took the time to write it all down," she said.

"Oh. I thought you wanted me to bring it and read it," I said.

"If you want, I can read it. However, the purpose of the exercise is for you begin your healing. The letter was a starting off point. I'll probably have you do the same exercise when we've distanced ourselves from the whole ordeal that you just overcame," Dr. Lunes replied.

I nodded and put the letter back into my bag, closing the flap.

"So, how was the rest of your week?"

"It was good. Boring. I hated being away from school, but I didn't have the mental focus to be in classes. I also didn't have medical clearance to go back to classes, either. I spent a lot of time watching television, catching up on my reading assignments for school and fussing around the apartment," I said as I crossed my legs.

"Physically, how are you doing?"

"I'm getting better. I went to the doctor on Friday and was cleared to return to classes today. I'm exhausted right now, but I'm physically fine."

## La Cantante

"Was it Dr. Cullen who took care of you in the hospital?"

"Yeah. He's great. Normally a specialist like him wouldn't do what he did," I said quietly.

"He's a fantastic oncologist. I work with a few of patients while they are dealing with the grief of having cancer. I've heard nothing but wonderful things about him. What happened at your appointment with him?" Dr. Lunes questioned.

"He looked me over. Checked my reflexes, my vision and the healing of my ribs. He also gave me my Depo-Provera shot. However, on the way to his office..."

"What happened, Bella?"

"We drove right past the accident site. I started having a panic attack," I replied quietly. "I felt so badly for Edward. He was so powerless. He was driving and he couldn't stop the car on the highway. He eventually pulled over at a McDonalds and eased me down," I whispered.

"What did he do?"

"He got out of the car and forced me to listen to his voice. In case you haven't heard, his voice is incredibly soothing. Like velvet," I smiled.

"He has a very nice speaking voice. What did he do to bring you back?"

"He talked to me and I eventually moved from the car. I laid my head against his chest and listened to his heart. The steady beating of his heart automatically calms me. He gently held me until I regained control of my emotions."

"How long did it take, Bella?" Dr. Lunes pressed.

"I'm not sure. Maybe five minutes, perhaps a bit more?"

## La Cantante

"What would you do if Edward wasn't with you?" Dr. Lunes posed.

"I don't know. Take deep breaths and focus on what I can control."

"Good answer. What can you control, Bella?"

"I can only control my reaction to a situation. Not the situation itself," I said contemplatively.

"Excellent. Do you want Edward to come in?"

I nodded and Dr. Lunes got up to go get Edward. He sauntered in and sat down next to me. I reached for his hand and laced my fingers with his.

"Edward, you've been with Bella this whole week. Tell me what you've seen, in regards to her improvement," Dr. Lunes stated simply.

"I could tell that Bella was incredibly bored the past week. I probably would be too. She is definitely a person that needs to be constantly doing something. Suffice it to say, our apartment is immaculate," he chuckled. "In regard to her mood, I've seen a definite improvement. Especially since she wrote the letter to Jacob."

"Did you read it, Edward?"

"Yeah. I know the whole story of what Jacob did to her and while the letter didn't really go into detail, she laid into him pretty effectively. The biggest change that I've seen happened today. We have a classmate who was spreading rumors about Bella for the reason why she was gone. The rumors were very nasty and hurtful. If Bella had heard the rumors before, she would have just shut down. Instead, she had the attitude of not caring, stating that our classmate was not worth our time. I think I'm more upset about the whole situation than Bella is."

"What was your classmate saying about Bella?"

## La Cantante

"The classmate said that the reason that Bella was gone was due to the fact that she had an...uh...an abortion," Edward mumbled.

"That is awful. Your classmate obviously has some jealousy issues," Dr. Lunes' spat.

"Yeah. However, Bella turned the situation in a different light. Instead of focusing on what Tanya, our classmate, was saying. She turned her attention to our future and the possibilities of having children with each other," Edward said with a warm smile. "It calmed me down, that's for sure. Instead of seething over what Tanya said, my attention was diverted to our future children."

"That's tremendous, Bella. I'm incredibly proud of you. You've made remarkable progress in one week."

"I do have a concern, though. Bella doesn't have much of an appetite. She's lost a good deal of weight since her accident. Is that due to her injury or something else?" Edward asked, his features expressing concern.

"How much weight have you lost, Bella?" Dr. Lunes asked.

"I'm not sure. I haven't gotten on the scale. My clothes are very loose though."

"I think she's lost at least ten pounds," Edward said quietly.

"How much did you weigh prior to your accident?" Dr. Lunes inquired.

"I'm not sure. About 110 pounds?" I replied.

"I'm not entirely positive if your loss of appetite is due to your injury or due to the trauma you are dealing with. However, I do want you to track what you eat for the next week, okay?"

I nodded and gave a small smile, almost embarrassed at my situation.

## La Cantante

"Now, I've spoken with your psychiatrist in Port Angeles and he informed me about his diagnosis," Dr. Lunes stated. "He also faxed over your file. I had the opportunity to look it over before our appointment today. According to his diagnosis, you were have depression and anxiety disorder, correct?"

"Yes. I was on anti-depressants for a while, but eventually got off them before I came to Emerson. I still take ativan as needed. I've had to take quite a few the past few months," I replied. Edward squeezed my hand and gave me a smile.

"Now, I'm not a psychiatrist and I can't prescribe medications. I'm just a psychologist. However, I concur with his diagnosis. I also want to add Post Traumatic Stress Disorder to your diagnosis, especially in light of what happened recently. How are you with your ativan prescription?"

"I'm good. I have two more refills and I only take a half to one each time I need one," I responded.

"If you do need another refill, we have a psychiatrist here on staff and he would meet with you," Dr. Lunes explained. "Now, you've made tremendous strides the past week. Your homework is to continue moving forward and work on the coping strategies if Edward is not with you. Here's a hand out of some breathing techniques and relaxation techniques that you might find helpful. Also, I would suggest journaling your feelings. Writing helped out a great deal in the form of a letter. Perhaps you can use that momentum to continue on the same path."

I held the breathing and relaxation hand out in my fingers. I skimmed over it and slipped it into my messenger bag. "Thank you, Dr. Lunes."

"Enough of this Dr. Lunes stuff. Please call me Stephenie. Do you want to meet the same time next week?" she asked.

"I'll have to ask my driver," I teased. I looked at Edward and he was stifling a few laughs.



## La Cantante

"That's fine. Actually, I may borrow Alice's car because I need to do my observation hours for intro to education and my first meeting with the students is on Monday after University Singers. You can take the car," he said.

"Okay, baby."

"Great, I'll see you next week, Bella. Keep up the good work," Stephenie said with a warm smile.

"Thank you, Stephenie. I'll see you next week," I replied. Edward picked up my bag and we walked down to the receptionist. She informed me that my bill was paid and she would see me next week. I looked at Edward and he just shrugged. We drove home. I was perplexed who paid my bill and Edward was adamant that he didn't do it.

For dinner, I ate my leftovers and Edward had a bowl of cereal. I spent some time working on my make up assignment for music literature. I was almost done and I just wanted Edward to proofread it. He made a few corrections and I adjusted it on my laptop and printed it out. I placed the finished paper into my bag and went to go take a shower. Edward got up and followed me into the bathroom.

"What are you doing, Edward Anthony?" I teased, putting my hands on my hips.

"Uh, isn't it obvious? I'm taking a shower," he snorted.

I narrowed my eyes and poked his sides, causing him to snort some more.

"Bella, you are evil. Stop it!"

"Did I invite you to shower with me?"

"No, but can I?" he pouted. He stuck out his bottom lip and fluttered his lashes.

"Please? Pretty please?"

## La Cantante

"Oh my word. How can I deny that? Pitiful, Edward. That is just pitiful," I said as I smacked his arm.

"But you love me," he giggled. He took off his glasses and whipped off his sweater and t-shirt. I looked at him as he turned around to toss his shirts into the bedroom. The muscles in his back rippled as he moved. He turned around and caught me staring. "Enough ogling. You can't shower fully dressed. Do you need help?" he asked with a wicked smile across his face.

I blinked and nodded, giving my own puppy dog pout. "Pitiful, Swan. You look like an anime character," he teased as he reached for the hem of my sweater. He gently lifted my sweater over my head and put it on the floor. He ghosted his fingers over my arms, causing my skin to pebble in gooseflesh. He smiled crookedly and turned on the shower. I reached for a hair tie and pulled my hair into a high ponytail. I spent an hour straightening it and I didn't want to wash it. Edward snaked his arms around my waist. "I love you, baby."

After I finished with my hair, I cupped his face. Edward smiled and leaned down to kiss me. I held my fingers to his lips before they were on mine. "I love you too, Edward. Thank you for your support the past few weeks, few months. You are amazing." Our eyes met and his gaze softened. He gently removed my fingers from his lips and kissed me reverently. My hands weaved into his soft hair and he sighed against my lips, pressing his body closer to mine. Edward's loving touch moved up my back and reached my bra. He unclasped the offending garment and removed it from my body. His fingers ran across my skin but never touched my breasts. This wasn't about sex. This was about regaining intimacy. My fingers mirrored his actions across his strong, muscled chest. He pulled away and looked down at me with such love, I thought my heart was going to burst through my chest.

I unbuttoned Edward's jeans and eased them over his hips as he did with my pants. Edward removed his boxers and tossed them in the corner of the bathroom. I removed my panties and stepped into the shower. Edward followed me. My back was to him and he wrapped his arms around me. He put his chin onto my shoulder, kissing my neck and nibbling on my ear. I laid my hands on his forearms and melted against him. I turned around and looked at him. I stood

## La Cantante

on my tiptoes and kissed his jaw and moved my lips to his ear and the sensitive spot behind his ear. He wrapped his arms around my waist and held me closely. I felt safe in his embrace.

I gently pushed him back under the warm spray of the water and he wet his hair. I reached for his body wash and a washcloth. I squeezed some of his body wash onto the washcloth and ran it across his wide shoulders. As I washed him, his eyes closed and he hummed. His fingers and hands never left my body as I cleaned him. I gently pushed him onto the bench in the shower stall. I squeezed some shampoo into my hands and ran my fingers through his wet, bronze hair. I created a thick lather and massaged his scalp. His eyes never left mine as I washed his hair or his body. I tugged on his hands and he stood up, moving under the spray of water. He knelt in front of me and leaned his head back. I rinsed his hair and the soap ran down the drain. Edward looked up at me and reached for my freesia body wash. Using his hands, he washed my body carefully, mindful of my still bruised ribs. His fingers were slow, gentle and loving as he washed me. After he washed my body, he stood up to his full height, and held me against his chest. I laid my head against his heart, listening to the steady beat. I took a deep breath and smiled. This was my happy place. This is the place I would come if I ever lost control in my mind. Safe in Edward's arms, listening to his heart. I placed a kiss on his chest, right on the swan.

"I love you, *il mio cantante*," he whispered. "Thank you for coming back to me."

"I love you, too, *bello*," I replied. "You brought me back and I'll always be with you."

**A/N: Lots of positives in this chapter...Bella's letter to Jacob, Dr. Lunes' approval of Bella's improvements, regaining the intimacy in Edward and Bella's relationships. Also, some drama as well...Tanya and Victoria. Leave some love. Please :)**

# Amazed

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 66: Amazed

### EPOV

I am blown away by Isabella Swan. She is the epitome of strength, grace, and poise. I'm so fucking lucky that she's with me. On her first back in classes after her accident, she handled the stress extraordinarily well. I could tell that she was overwhelmed, but it didn't consume her. I was even more surprised after the situation with Tanya. The hateful, spiteful bitch was spreading hideous rumors that Bella had an abortion while she was out. When I heard that, I was ready to spit nails, rip off her head and burn her body to a well-done crisp. I told her as such on Friday when I did hear what she was saying, as did the rest of the choir. Eleazar was fuming and he had had enough of her crap. I knew her jig was up when Eleazar called her over to the piano after rehearsal on Monday. Little did I know that she was being summarily thrown out of the choral program at Emerson and was going to receive a failing grade on her report card. Anyhow, Bella calmed me down after the fallout of Tanya's removal from the program and switched my thoughts from Tanya to our future. Our future children, to be more specific.

Babies with my beautiful Bella. I want them now, but I know it was too soon. Way too soon, but a guy can dream, right?

When we returned from Bella's appointment on Monday evening, things felt so much lighter than they have been since we first started dating. I was working on some reading for sociology and Bella was completing her makeup assignment for music literature. She asked me to read it and I did so, willingly.

## La Cantante

She had concisely captured all of the major points in both the Renaissance and Baroque musical eras in three pages. I made a few grammatical corrections, but was impressed with her wording, writing style and layout of the paper. She made my papers look like an amateur. She made the changes and printed it out. Bella then said she was going to shower. I closed my *boring* sociology book and followed her into the bathroom. She gave me such a hard time, asking if I was invited to shower with her. I gave her my best puppy dog pout, complete with juttied out lower lip and fluttering the eyelashes, and she relented. I knew she would.

Our shower was not sexual or heated. It was our way of reconnecting with each other. We had begun to do so on Friday with Bella's orgasm. I'm still so proud of that. I made her squirt.

### *Focus, Cullen!*

As I was saying before my dirty mind ran away from me, was we reconnected in her shower. It almost seemed like we were washing away the past. The drama with Jacob. The frustrations with Renee. The stupidity of Tanya. All of that was washed away during our fifteen minute shower. We were starting new in our lives. Our new beginning was confirmed by the affirmation of our love. We said we loved each other like we did at the start of our relationship. We solidified our lives with each other. Bella and I slept entwined with each other that night, never breaking our hold of the other. It was the best I'd slept in months. I was certain that it was the same with Bella. She didn't move, cry out or have a nightmare at all.

When we woke up the next morning, we were both refreshed and ready to face the day. We spent the remainder of the week in the same fashion. Things were smooth and relaxed. Bella was still slightly overwhelmed with the amount of work she had to do, but was not letting it consume her.

On Wednesday, we ended up having a Breaking Midnight rehearsal. Bella was adamant on coming. I told her to not push it as she was still recovering. She felt that she was shirking her responsibilities if she didn't. However, it was her mind that told us to create a checking account for Breaking Midnight so we

## La Cantante

could deposit our 'paychecks' from Eclipse. We had made approximately \$3,500 in the three times we performed. We all will be able to deposit the checks into the account, but Bella and I were the only authorized users to write checks. Jasper and Emmett were fine with that. Jasper said that he and math were sworn enemies. Emmett said that Bella had been balancing the family check book since she was seven and he trusted her. Hell, she handled all of the finances for the apartment and I was okay with that. I was also not a math guru and if she could balance a checkbook, I'll love her for the rest of my existence. Well, I already do, but still. I added her to my checking account and gave her a debit card. She gawked at the gesture, but I told her that in a few months, we'd be doing it anyway.

We kept rehearsal pretty short, deciding on some previously played songs and adding a few new ones. Bella was going to stay on the keyboard for our performance on Saturday as it hurt her ribs to play the guitar. I wanted to tell her that she didn't need to play at all and she should be a part of the audience. Bella was too stubborn to agree with me and still wound up rehearsing and will play with us on Saturday.

On Thursday, we had a test in both sociology and music literature. Rose came over to our apartment after our rehearsal on Wednesday and studied with us for the music literature test. Bella was panicked, but I knew she would do fine. She was answering questions that even Rose and I couldn't get. She must have a photographic memory or something. After our two tests, Bella went to the mall with Emmett and Alice came over to the apartment. Rose and Jasper had class.

Alice waltzed into the apartment and sat down on the couch. "How are you doing, Big Brother?" she asked.

"I'm good, Pixie. Very good, actually," I responded sitting down next to her. "To what do I owe this visit?"

"I'm curious as to what you are getting Bella for Valentine's day?" Alice asked.

"I was going to get her a new charm for her charm bracelet. Something to symbolize strength," I answered.

## La Cantante

"Is that all, Edward?" Alice pressed.

"Should I get her more? Is that what you are suggesting, Mary Alice?" I teased.

"You can get her what you want, but a *charm*?" she snorted.

"Alice, I spent a shitload of money on an engagement ring for her," I reasoned.

"Yeah, how much did you spend, Edward?" Alice asked.

"You promise not to tell Bella?" I asked.

"I promise."

"Pinky promise?"

"Pinky promise," she responded, holding up her right hand, pinky extended. I linked my pinky with hers and we 'shook' on it.

"\$26,000," I said, looking at my sister sheepishly.

"Fuck me," she said, sitting back against the cushions of the sofa. "I knew it was expensive, but I never thought *that* much!"

"Bella deserves the best. She got it, as you so aptly put it when you rattled off the carat weight and clarity," I laughed.

"Okay, Edward, you can get away with getting her a charm for her charm bracelet. I didn't realize that you spent that much. Holy cow! I'd also get some flowers or something," Alice suggested.

"I was going to. White, pink and purple roses were what I was thinking of," I replied.

"Like you got in Seattle?"

## La Cantante

"Yep. She really like them and she also told me that the wedding colors were going to be purple and white," I reasoned.

"Edward, it's going to be so beautiful. You and Bella are the most perfect couple and you are going to have the most perfect wedding," Alice enthused.

"I can't wait, Alice," I said, with a distant look in my eyes. "How about you and Jasper? How are things going with you?"

"They're great. He's so sweet. We're going out to Tsunami on Sunday for our Valentine's day dinner," Alice said. "I've got him this first edition Civil War book about the Texas Cavalry. There's a mention of his great grandfather in there. He's going to love it!"

"I'm sure he will. I have a favor to ask of you, though." I replied.

"Sure, what is it, Edward?"

"Can I borrow your car on Monday? Bella has her therapy appointment and I need to drive to meet with Garrett for my first set of observation hours."

"Of course, Big Brother," she replied, wrapping her arms around my neck.

"You really look happy, Edward. I am so thrilled for you. I'm so glad that you and Bella are finally over this Jacob thing and things are looking up."

"Me too, Alice. I don't know how much more Bella and I could have handled." I heard the door jiggle and Bella walked in with Emmett on her heels. She held a small bag in her hands. She gave me a wink and darted into the bedroom. Emmett gave me a wicked smile. He walked into the kitchen and grabbed a pop. "I'm so happy you feel comfortable here, Em."

"What? I buy you beer, Cullen. Can't I pilfer a..." he looked at the can, "Cherry Coke Zero?"

"I'm just joshing you, Emmett. Jeez," I chuckled.



## La Cantante

"How are you doing, Tinkerbelle?" Emmett asked as he plopped down on the couch.

"I'm good, Bear," she giggled. "What did you and Bella do?"

"We went shopping," Emmett responded cryptically.

"And...?" Alice pressed.

"And, we bought stuff," Emmett bellowed.

"Inside voice, Emmy," Bella chastised. "That's all your getting, Pixie. Don't pester him."

"So, Bella are you excited about our girls trip to Vermont next weekend?" Alice asked, bouncing on the couch. Bella sat down and put her feet into my lap. I began massaging her arches and she moaned lightly. It went straight to my crotch.

*I so need to get laid. Damn it.*

"I'm very excited, Alice. Edward, I love you dearly, but I need some girl time," Bella said as she ruffled my hair.

"As you should, baby," I replied, squeezing her feet.

"So, what are we doing while we're in Vermont?" Bella asked.

"Well, we're leaving after University Singers. Esme is going to pick us up from here. She's bringing the Land Rover. It'll take a few hours to get there. We should be there by no later than 6? I think. We're probably going to just have dinner and relax at the villa. You're also going to meet Rose's mom. She's going to be there. On Saturday, we're going to spend the day at the spa getting beautified. I've already spoken with Carlisle and he said that you can get a massage, as long as you inform the masseuse of your injuries. We're going out for a fancy dinner on Saturday evening. On Sunday, we're having brunch and

## La Cantante

then heading back to campus. While we're at our mini-vacation, we're going to do a lot of planning for your wedding. Choosing invitations, flower arrangements and finalizing the menu. It's going to be so much fun. I also have done some research about photographers, videographers and stationary," Alice replied, speaking a million miles an hour.

"Stationary?" Bella asked.

"Yeah. For the personalized menu cards for each guest. We also need to discuss table linens and tablescapes for the reception," Alice said absentmindedly.

"Oh, Lord," Bella laughed, rolling her eyes. "This is turning from a small, intimate wedding into the wedding of the century."

"Edward said you want the best," Alice said, nodding seriously.

Bella looked at me, with her eyes narrowed. I held my hands in defense. "I said you deserve the best. The Pixie is misinterpreting my words, beautiful," I clarified.

"Are all weddings like this?" Emmett asked.

"Not the bad ones," Alice replied. "I'm not about to have Bella and Edward get married at the local VFW, wearing a bad suit and a used dress. This is going to be an elegant affair. Deal with it."

"The Pixie has spoken," Bella said.

"Damn right," Alice giggled. "Don't you two have Express rehearsal?"

I looked down at my watch and jumped off the couch. "Shit! We gotta go, Bella."

Emmett, Alice and Bella got up off the couch. Alice grabbed her coat from the kitchen. I helped Bella with her coat and Emmett was already in his. I put my

## La Cantante

coat over my shoulders and picked my keys. We all rode down in the elevator. Alice and Emmett got off at the first floor and walked out to their cars. Bella and I continued to the basement and got into the new and improved Volvo. We parked in front of Brandon and walked into the auditorium and slipped off our coats. Bella was not going to be dancing today, but wanted to be there for the vocal rehearsal. Everyone was huddled on stage, speaking animatedly.

"Hey guys," I said as Bella and I got onto the stage. She held her hand in mine and smiled at the group.

"Hi, Bella. Hey, Edward," Mike replied. "You'll never believe what we just heard. Tanya Denali has dropped out of school. Well, her parents pulled her out of Emerson. They were so embarrassed by her behavior that they had her drop her classes and she's attending community college."

"No way," Bella whispered. "Good riddance to bad rubbish."

"You can say that again," I said, nuzzling her hair. Bella looked at me and gave me a warm smile. She ran her fingers along my cheek and kissed my chin.

Felix burst into the auditorium and he walked over to the band. He handed them some music and distributed the music to the group. Rose ran into the auditorium as Felix was passing out the music. He gave her a look, but didn't comment. Rose was very flustered and appeared to be very upset.

Felix stopped in front of Bella and I. His face broke into a huge grin. "Bella! It's so good to have you back, my dear! I've missed you so!" Felix gushed as he gave her a hug and air kissed her cheeks. "Are you able to dance?"

"Not yet, Felix. I can mark my spots and do simple choreography but it'll be a few weeks before I can dance full out," Bella explained.

"Will you be able to perform after spring break?"

"Yes, sir. Why?"

## La Cantante

"Well, I was going to save this announcement for the end, but I'll do it now. We've been invited to perform at a national competition in New York City three weeks after we return from spring break. We're going to perform our full show. That includes any duets, dance duets and solos. After rehearsal, if I could have Rosalie, Bella, Tyler and Edward stay after that would be great" Felix gushed. "On to the music. Let's read what you have in your hands."

We read through an arrangement of "Eli's Coming" and it was a cool part. Especially for the tenors. I was stoked about this piece. The choreography was a lot of fun, too. After our rehearsal, we then ran through the pieces that we had learned so far. Bella sang, but didn't dance. You could tell that she wanted to, though. At the conclusion of our rehearsal, the group began gathering their things and leaving. The four of us who were asked to stay, sat down at the edge of the stage. Bella leaned against me and yawned. She was sleeping well, but still tired easily.

"Okay, folks. We're doing a bit of a change up. The 'Four Minutes' Duet?" Felix began.

Rose and I looked at each other and nodded. "What's up?" she asked.

"Well, I'm making a switch. Tyler, you're going to do the duet with Rose. Edward, you did a fantastic job, but I want to feature you and Bella in a duet," Felix said.

"What do you have in mind, Felix?" Bella asked, her voice tired.

"'Fever,'" Felix said simply. "I'm working on arranging a duet version of it. However, I'm thinking that it'll be similar to the Michael Buble arrangement. I also want you both to do a dance to it. I'm going to choreograph it as I want to be very jazzy and smooth. I'm also going to be adding some costume changes. Tyler and Rose? 'Four Minutes' is going to have a more hip hop costume feel to go with the choreography that you created. For 'Fever,' I'm thinking all black on the both of you, with red accents. So?"

"I'm cool with that," Tyler replied. He was cool with everything.

## La Cantante

"Whatever you want, Felix," Rose said quietly.

Bella and I shared a look. She had this panicked expression on her face. I cupped her cheeks and soothed her. Her eyes fluttered closed and she took a few deep breaths. She gave a minute nod. "Works for us."

"Excellent. I know we don't have classes on the 21st, but can we meet to start the choreography for 'Fever?'" Felix asked.

"That's fine, Felix. It'll be fun," Bella said, acting more relaxed. "I'm looking forward to dancing with Edward."

"It'll be hot," Felix said. "People will be fanning themselves."

"Keep it PG, Felix," I teased.

"Right, Edward," he said. "Have a great Valentine's day and I'll see you all next week."

We all gathered our things and headed out of the auditorium. Rose was very quiet, almost appeared to be fading into the shadows. Bella waited for her and put her arm around her shoulders. "Are you okay, Rose?"

"No."

"What's wrong, Rose?" I asked, moving closer to her. She recoiled away from me, like I was a snake. I decided to hang back. Even while we were dancing, Rose was very distant. She didn't want to be touched and only would barely grab hands with her partner.

"Sorry, Edward," Rose mumbled.

"Don't worry about it, Rose. I don't want to make you uncomfortable," I said, staying away.

## La Cantante

"Rose, what happened? Why are you afraid of Edward? Of any of the guys today?" Bella questioned.

"The State's Attorney from Cook County called me today. That's why I was late to rehearsal. I was on the phone with him. They set a trial date for my rape case," Rose whispered.

"Rose, this is good news. It means you can put it behind you," Bella said as she rubbed soothing circles on her back.

"I know. However, it reopened some of my wounds from when it happened. It was a year ago this week that he did it. When he took my innocence from me and it's hitting hard, you know?" Rose said as she slipped to the floor of the auditorium.

"When is the trial, Rose?" I asked, still maintaining my distance. I didn't want to alarm her. I knew that I didn't do anything wrong. However, she was leery of the male species.

"It's over spring break. I have to testify. I don't know if I can do it," she cried. She buried her head into her knees.

"Rose, you can do it. You are one the strongest people I know. I don't have anything planned over spring break. I can come with you," Bella offered. "I'm certain Emmett would be willing too."

"We are all here to support you, Rose. You don't have to do this alone," I said, crouching down in front of her. "I'd want to be there for you, too."

Rose lifted her head and looked at me. Her cornflower blue eyes were filled with tears. "You guys would be willing to give up your spring break to sit in a courtroom in Chicago?"

"Of course, Rose. You're my sister. I'd do anything for my sister," Bella said. I nodded in agreement.

## La Cantante

Rose wrapped her arms around Bella's neck and started thanking her profusely. Bella caught herself and hugged Rosalie in return. Rose pulled away from Bella and tackled me, causing me to fall on my ass. She threw her arms around my neck and kissed my cheek. I gently patted her back. She pulled away and gave both of us a smile. "You have no idea how much this means to me. Thank you."

"We could all head to Chicago. It's not the warmest in March, but it's not here. I could show you some places I used to hang out when I was a kid and some other touristy things," I said. I hopped up off the ground and held my hands out for both Bella and Rose. I eased both of them off the floor.

"I forgot you lived there," Bella mused.

"Yep, for the first ten years of my life," I responded. We walked out the car. I gave Rose a ride to Patterson. She wanted to be with Emmett. On the brief ride, Rose told us when the trial was and when she was flying out. Our spring break was March 21 to March 28. Rose was leaving on the 20th. Bella and I said that we would arrange to leave on the same day. We texted Alice and Jasper and they agreed to come with us, as did Emmett.

Rose thanked us again before she hopped out of the Volvo and into Emmett's waiting arms. Bella and I waved as we drove off to our apartment and made a quick meal. Bella made a huge Cobb salad and some garlic bread. I sat on the counter in the kitchen and stared at my remarkable fiancée.

"Edward, you're freaking me out with all of the looks," she teased as she cut up the ham and chicken.

"You are astounding, beautiful," I stated.

She looked over her shoulder at me and rolled her eyes. "How am I 'astounding?'" she asked, mimicking my tone.

"You are so selfless and kind. I am just amazed by you," I whispered as I hopped off the counter. I wrapped my arms around her waist and kissed her

## La Cantante

cheek. "You made Rose feel better and diffused a very tense situation."

"Rose and I share similar stories. If Jacob had done *that* to me, I'd want the same thing from her," Bella reasoned. "Besides, I've never been to the 'Windy City.'"

"You'll like it. Probably better than New York," I laughed.

"What's wrong with New York?" she asked.

"The people are incredibly rude and it's filthy," I offered. "Chicago is friendly, clean and a lot of fun."

"Well, I'll get to experience them both and then I'll make my ruling," she giggled. "Can you grab the dressing from the fridge?"

"That means I need to let you go," I pouted. I held her waist tighter and burrowed my nose into her hair. "I don't want to let you go."

"Edward, it's three feet. Deal with it," she joked.

"Meanie," I grumbled as I relinquished my hold on her waist. I opened the fridge and pulled out the dressing she wanted. She shook it up and covered the salad with it. She tossed the salad and pulled the garlic bread from the oven. I took out a couple of plates and two bottles of water. We sat down at the kitchen table and dug into the salad that Bella made.

After dinner, I did the dishes. I put the dishes into the dishwasher and I pulled out my laptop. Bella was sitting on the couch, reading for psychology. I carried my laptop and sat down next to her. I opened up an airline website and started looking for flights to Chicago. "When do you want to leave for Chi-town?"

"On March 20th," she responded.

"Duh. What time, specifically," I teased, kissing her nose.



"Dork. What's available?"

"There's a flight at 8 that's a direct flight. The next flight that's available has a couple of connections," I explained.

"Let's go with the direct flight," Bella said. "I'm paying for the tickets, though."

"Bella," I whined. "Let me do this."

"Edward, you spend entirely way too much money on me. I have the reimbursement from the university from when Jacob broke into the dorm. I was going to use it to purchase a new guitar, but seeing as I got one for Christmas, I didn't need to buy one," Bella said, staring into my eyes. "You can purchase the tickets online, but I'm writing you a check. Got it?"

I narrowed my eyes. Bella mirrored my actions. "Do you want a blowjob for Valentine's day?" she said calmly.

My eyes nearly bugged out of their sockets, "Excuse me?"

"I don't think I'll be physically ready to make love to you, Edward. However, I was planning on making you feel good. If you don't let me pay for the tickets to Chicago, you are not getting a blowjob," Bella said.

"That's blackmail," I sputtered.

"No, it's...it's...alright, it's blackmail. But, do you want a blowjob on Valentine's day or not?"

"Do you really need to ask that question twice?" I laughed. "Ugh, fine. You can write me a check. Doesn't mean I'm going to *cash it*."

"Edward Anthony Masen Cullen," she said. "Do I need to go to the cash station just to prove a point?"

"No. You are so stubborn, Bella. Jeez!"

## La Cantante

"However, you love me. Stubborn streak and all. How much?" she said with a triumphant grin.

I told her the amount and she bounced off the couch and got her check book. I purchased the tickets and received a confirmation email. She quickly returned with a check and handed it to me. "Do I need to personally deposit this into your checking account, Cullen?"

"No. I'll do it," I grumbled.

"Tomorrow, Cullen."

"Damn, woman. You are force of nature," I laughed.

"Hurricane Bella. I like the sound of that," she giggled. "Endorse the check, Edward."

I rolled my eyes and held my hand out for the pen. I quickly endorsed the check and stuck it in my wallet. I emailed Rose our flight information and carbon copied my parents on the email. After the plane ticket fiasco, Bella insisted on doing some work on our assessment project for educational psychology. Before we created our assessments, we needed to choose what we were assessing. Bella suggested that we stray from a choral assessment and focus on something that is easily tested. We decided on music theory and solfege. We wrote one assessment for bodily-kinesthetic intelligence and then decided to head to bed.

xx LC xx

On Friday, we had a theory test. Bella and I both finished early and had some time to eat breakfast at The Cage before heading to psychology. Bella had also turned in one of the missing assignments to Larry and scheduled to retake a quiz that she missed for Monday after University Singers.

In psychology, Hafenrichter was in rare form. He spoke like he was on crack. I eventually gave up on taking legible notes and decided to rely on my small

## La Cantante

digital recorder to get the information. Bella followed suit and buried her head in her hands. I rubbed soothing circles on her back as she moaned. We went our separate ways after psychology. She went to the science building and I went to education. We received our final project assignments. It was the same project that Bella had: to create a classroom unit in the major you are studying. She informed that, like Bella, I couldn't do a choral unit. I needed to choose something from a general music curriculum. I decided to do a unit on American Popular music, focusing on jazz and blues.

When I arrived at University Singers, you could feel the lack of tension in the room. It's amazing how ONE person can change the dynamic of a choir. Tanya, while a talented singer, caused drama. Even after she left, there was tension and drama around her abrupt departure. Since she was no longer a student at Emerson, life was good. Eleazar informed us that we were having combined sectionals again. I was grateful to be paired with Bella. This was an unannounced sectional rehearsal. Bella and I fell into our familiar roles in our combined sectional. I was the accompanist and Bella was the instructor. Our sections felt at ease with her and so did I.

The unfortunate thing was I started to feel kind of crappy as the day went on. I had woken up with a mild headache. As the day progressed, the headache had become more pronounced and I was getting body aches. I was hoping that I wasn't coming down with something. I'd been pretty fortunate in the health department. I had a minor cold in the fall, but nothing serious. Bella was giving me concerned looks as rehearsal continued. When we got back together, Bella laid her hand on my forehead and her brow furrowed.

"You're pale, Edward and I think you're running a fever," she said quietly.

"I wasn't feeling good this morning and it's getting worse as the day as gone on. I hope I can do our show at Eclipse tomorrow," I croaked.

"Baby, if you're sick, you can't," she said.

"We signed a contract. We already missed two dates because of your accident. They were more than willing to let them slide, but we *need* to perform

tomorrow," I sighed. "Fuck."

"As soon as we're done with University Singers, we're going straight home and you are going to bed," Bella said sternly. I was feeling awful. I nodded and leaned my head against her shoulder. I didn't participate in the rest of the rehearsal. I just followed in my music and jotted down some notes in my scores. We were dismissed from class and I handed Bella the keys to the car. She took them and we left the choir room. Alice frowned as we left. Bella drove us back to the apartment, going obscenely slowly. I razzed her, but she responded that she wasn't used to the new car and she would get better as she drove it more. She pulled into our parking spot and my stomach lurched. I ran out of the car and heaved the contents of my stomach into the dumpster. Bella followed me, "Oh, Edward."

"Fuck my life," I groaned. "I can't have the stomach flu."

"Come on, Pukeward," she teased.

"Great, tease me in my hour of need. Thanks, Bella," I said sardonically.

"I need to get you in to bed. Hopefully it's a 24 hour thing and you'll be fine by tomorrow," she reasoned. "I'm going to run to the store and get some Gatorade and some saltines for you after I deposit you into our bed."

We rode up in the elevator. I was crouched down, holding my stomach. As soon as the doors opened, I sprinted down the hall and nearly broke down the door to get to the guest bathroom to throw up again. I heard Bella shut the door and rummage around in the master bathroom. I was curled up on the floor, next to the toilet. Bella came in and stuck the thermometer in my ear. It beeped loudly. "101.7. Do you want to stay here or try to go in to bed?"

"Stay here. I feel like shit," I groaned.

"Let's get your coat off," she said.

"Do I have to? I'm cold," I whined.

## La Cantante

"I'm pretty certain you don't to vomit on your jacket. I'll get you a fleece. That's washable," Bella laughed. I sat up and leaned against the bathtub. I pulled off my jacket as Bella got my heaviest fleece, blanket and my pillow. "Here's some water. I know it's probably the last thing you want, but you need to stay hydrated, Edward. Do you want me to call your dad?"

"No. We'll call him if it lasts longer than one day," I said quietly, closing my eyes.

"I'm going to go to the grocery store. I'll be back in an hour at most. Call me if you need anything, okay?" she said as she caressed my cheeks. I felt so gross and so sick. I hated it. I nodded weakly. Bella kissed my forehead and darted off to the store. I grabbed my pillow and curled up on the cold bathroom floor. I laid my phone next to me and prayed I didn't need it.

I closed my eyes and I heard my phone chirp. I picked it up and saw I had a new text.

*Bella called me and said you have the stomach flu - Dad*

*I think so. Thrown up twice, feeling very nauseous and running a fever - E*

*What's your temp? - Dad*

I grabbed the thermometer and stuck it in my ear. It registered 102. 5. It's gone up. Shit.

*102.5 - E*

*Other than nausea, vomiting and fever, what are your symptoms? - Dad*

*Chills, body aches, severe headache - E*

*I can prescribe some Reglan? - Dad*

*Call it into the pharmacy. Bella can pick it up. Thanks - E*

## La Cantante

*No thanks needed. Call if you feel any worse - Dad*

*Will do. Love you - E*

*Love you, too - Dad*

I put my phone down and laid back on my pillow. I had thrown up a few more times when Bella had called as she was on her way back. She informed me that she had my prescription. I began to chastise her for calling Carlisle, but she was insistent on making me feel better. About a half hour later, Bella returned and I was still in the bathroom.

"Come on, Edward. Get up," she said, holding out her hands.

"I'm afraid to move," I grumbled. "I don't want to puke all over you."

"It's a risk I'm willing to take. I want to at least get you in the master bathroom. It's bigger and I can help you if something happens. Up."

I swatted her hands away and wrapped the blanket around my shoulders. I heaved my sore, aching body off the ground and fought a fresh wave of nausea. I gathered myself and followed Bella into the bedroom. There were a few bags from Target on the bed. Bella gently guided me to the chair in our bedroom. "You need to get comfortable, Edward. Let me help you."

She pushed the blanket off my shoulders. She unzipped the fleece and removed it, along with the sweater I was wearing. I began shivering. Bella's brow furrowed and she held out a black thermal t-shirt. She pulled it over my head. She then put the fleece over the t-shirt. "Stand up, baby." Bella held out her hands and heaved me off the chair. She unbuckled my belt and undid my jeans. She eased them down my legs and took them off. She held up a pair of the softest flannel pajama bottoms and tucked my legs into them. They were new and were covered in Garfield. Bella pushed me back into the chair and I chuckled. "Now, we both have our sick Garfield pajamas."

## La Cantante

"Thanks, Bella," I whispered. She was standing in front of me. I leaned my head forward and rested it on her chest. Like she does with me, I listened to her steadily beating of her heart. She gently ran her fingers through my hair, massaging my scalp. I weakly wrapped my arms around her waist. We stayed like that for a few moments, until I hopped up and ran to the bathroom. I heaved over the toilet and I felt I was throwing up my entire stomach. I sat back and ran my hand through my hair. I was drenched in sweat and I was exhausted. Bella came into the bathroom and sat down in front of me. She held out a bottle of red Gatorade and a pill.

"Your dad said you need to keep yourself hydrated and your electrolytes up. The pill is an anti-nausea medication. It's going to make you sleepy," she said. I picked up the pill and took a tentative sip of the sports drink. "Do you want to stay here or go into bed?"

"If I get sleepy, I want to be comfortable. Bed," I replied. "However, I'm too tired to move. My abs are killing me."

Bella held out a hand and helped me get up. She wrapped her arms around my waist and guided me to our bed. She placed the Gatorade on the bedside table. She also ran and got a large plastic garbage can and placed it next to me. I crawled in between the sheets and lay down against the pillows. I could feel the anti-nausea medication working. I was getting tired and the gurgling in my stomach was subsiding. I still felt nauseous, but not overly so.

"Can you stay with me until I go to sleep?" I asked weakly.

"Of course, handsome," Bella smiled. "I'm sorry you feel so gross. I wish I could make it go away."

"Just having you here makes it better," I replied. My eyelids drooped. "I love you, Bella."

"I love you too, Edward. Just sleep. I'll take care of you," she soothed. She ran her fingers through my hair and hummed lightly. The tune was familiar, but not at the same time. I tried to focus on the melody but couldn't. My eyes drifted

## La Cantante

shut and I fell into a fitful sleep.

xx LC xx

Poor Bella. She had to deal with me getting up all night long. I managed to get a few hour nap in. I tried eating some plain toast, but that was an epic fail. As soon as I finished the toast, I was in the bathroom puking it up. I was up every half hour running to the bathroom for the rest of the night. Bella sat with me, soothing me with her words, her caresses and her love. I didn't want her to get too close to me. I certainly didn't want her getting the flu from me. She couldn't handle the vomiting. Not with her injuries to her ribs. However, she refused to leave my side. She stayed up with me in the bathroom as I was sick. She helped me when I wanted to go back into the bed. She was amazing, astonishing and remarkable.

Close to daybreak, my vomiting had finally subsided. I had fallen into a deep sleep and was able to actually rest. I woke up around twelve, which was rare for me. I enjoy sleeping in, but the latest I can handle is about nine. However, when you're up most of the night worshipping the porcelain god, you need to sleep. Bella was snoozing on the couch, her biology book on her lap. I checked my temperature as she slept and it was closer to normal: 99.7.

I sat down on the couch and texted Emmett and Jasper.

*Are we still on for tonight? - E*

*That's all up to you, Pukeward - Em*

*Fuck my life - E*

*Blame my sister. She enjoys playing with your name too much - Em*

*If I can keep something down by 6, we're good to go. I want to add a song to our list, though. - E*

*What's that? - Em*



## La Cantante

*Amazing by Lonestar - E*

*For Bella? - Em*

*Yep. - E*

*Got it. Feel better - Em*

*Thanks - E*

I put the phone on the coffee table and looked at Bella as she slept. She had her glasses on. They were slightly askew on her face. Her hair was spread over the couch cushion, like a halo of mahogany tresses. She looked like an angel, which she was. I smiled as I watched her sleep.

"Hmmm, Edward," she mumbled. "Love you."

I chuckled. I knew that Bella sleep talked. It was adorable. "I love you more, beautiful. Thank you for taking care of me."

Bella rolled over and stretched her body. Her eyes fluttered open and she adjusted her glasses. "Hey, baby. What are you doing up? You need to rest."

"I couldn't sleep anymore," I replied as I stroked her cheek.

Bella put her book on the table and placed her hands on my forehead. "You seem cooler to the touch. What's your temperature?"

"99.7. It broke this morning," I said. "I'm weak, but I'm feeling better."

"Do you want to try some toast again?" she asked. I nodded and got up. "I'll make it. I can't have you pass out because I am unable to move you. Sit. Stay."

"I'm not a dog, Bella," I laughed. I settled back on the couch and turned on the television.

## La Cantante

"Good, Edward. Do you want a treat?" she teased as she tickled behind my ear.

"Funny, Bella," I retorted. She giggled and went into the kitchen. She made my toast and brought it with a small glass of ginger ale. I sipped the fizzy drink and managed to eat both slices of bread. To my surprise, I didn't have to run to the bathroom and heave my breakfast up. I sat on the couch for a little while longer, still keeping my distance from Bella, watching some reality show. After the episode was over I said I was going to shower.

I got up and moved slowly to our bedroom and into the bathroom. Bella had removed all evidence of my illness from the bathroom as I was sleeping. I had left a pillow, the blanket, and some Gatorade on the counter. They were all gone and it was sparkling in there. I really must have been out because I didn't hear a thing. I removed my fleece and t-shirt and tossed them onto the floor. I eased my new Garfield pajamas off my legs and giggled as I turned on the water. I stepped into the hot spray and relished in the warmth that spread through my body. I washed all of sickness off my skin and my hair. I stayed in the shower a bit longer, until I started getting lightheaded and my stomach began rumbling. That surely has to be a good sign.

I wrapped a towel around my waist and got dressed. I decided to put on my traditional 'costume' for Breaking Midnight, a pair of black jeans and black t-shirt. I wandered back out to the living room after I put on some deodorant and some cologne. I felt like I belonged in the land of the living, thank goodness.

"How was your shower? Feel better?" Bella asked.

"Much better. My stomach is actually rumbling. I'm going to assume that I'm over this," I chuckled.

"You probably should still take it easy with the food. I made some chicken soup while you were in your shower. It's simmering on the stove," Bella replied. "Are we going to perform tonight?"

"Yeah, I think so," I said. "Are you up to it?"

## La Cantante

"Definitely. I'm going to call Rose and Alice so they can help in getting me ready after I shower," Bella said. She got up and walked to the bedroom. I texted Emmett and Jasper to inform them that we were on for tonight. I turned to the stove and saw the small pot with the soup in it. It was bubbling and I ladled myself a small bowl and picked up some saltine crackers. I hesitantly ate my soup, but was pleased that my stomach didn't revolt. I figured I'd get another bowl before we headed to Eclipse.

As I was washing my bowl, my phone was ringing on the coffee table. I ran over and picked it up. I looked at the caller ID and saw it was Esme. "Hi, Esme."

"Oh, Edward, how are you feeling?" she gushed.

"I'm better. Thanks," I said I sat down on the couch.

"Bella called here yesterday, looking for Carlisle, saying you had the stomach flu. However, I'm glad you're better, my sweet boy."

"It was a 24 hour bug. It sucked though. I think I puked off at least seven to ten pounds. My jeans are a bit loose around the waist," I laughed.

"You'll gain those back when you start eating again. Keep it simple, though. Nothing too spicy," Esme chided.

"What else is up, Mom?" I asked.

"Well, Carlisle and I are going out for a nice dinner tonight for Valentine's day. Other than that, things are the status quo," she quipped. "What are you and Bella going to do?"

"I begin my observation hours on Monday, so I was going to swing by La Bella Italia and pick up some take out and set up our kitchen like an Italian restaurant. I'm also going to give Bella a new charm for her bracelet. I need to pick it up and I'm doing that tomorrow. It's the Chinese symbol for strength," I replied.

## La Cantante

"That sounds lovely, Edward. Nice and quiet," Esme sighed. "Oh, we got your email about Chicago. What's going on? I thought you'd never go back there."

"You remember Rosalie?" I asked.

"Of course. She's such a sweet girl," Esme said.

"Well, she was attacked a year ago and she has to testify at her attacker's trial. It's over our spring break. We all are heading to Chicago in support of Rose," I answered.

"Are you going to be okay going back?" Esme asked worriedly.

"I need to go back at some point. I haven't visited my mom's grave since the funeral and I want to see her, introduce her to Bella," I said quietly.

"I'm glad you are not going alone," Esme responded. "However, call me if you need anything while you're there. We can fly out in a heartbeat. I love you, Edward."

"I love you, too, Mom," I smiled. "I'll be fine. However, I have to go. The apartment buzzer is going mad. I'm assuming it's Alice."

"Patience is never one her strong suits. Bye, baby."

"Bye, Mom." I hung up the phone and answered the intercom, "What?"

"Nice to hear from you, too, Edward," Alice giggled. "Bella needs our assistance, can you buzz us up?"

"I suppose, evil fairy," I teased. I buzzed them in and left the door ajar. A few moments later, Rose and Alice walked in. Rose was snickering and Alice was glaring at me. "Be kind. I just spent the past twenty-four hours puking."

"I'll spare you, this time," Alice squeaked. "Only because I don't want you to puke all over me. Here, put this over your shirt."

## La Cantante

Alice handed me a bag. I looked inside and there was a red dress shirt and a plain black tie in there. "For tonight?"

"It is your Valentine's show. You should look the part. All of you guys are wearing the same thing, even Emmett," Alice responded. I nodded and went into the guest bathroom to put my shirt on. I buttoned it up and slipped the tie on, not pulling it all the way. I'll go with Alice's suggestion, but I'm going to be comfortable. I rolled up my sleeves and decided that I'd be wearing my black Chucks tonight to make the look more casual. I stared at my reflection and I still had the gaunt, sick appearance, but there was nothing I could do about that.

The girls were in the bedroom for a few hours. I heard Bella whining and Alice was being her usual bossy self. I sniggered as I watched some television. Jasper and Emmett came over right before we were supposed to head over to Eclipse. I had managed to eat something more substantial and I felt pretty good. I was tired, but I didn't feel sick. As Alice said, Jasper and Emmett were wearing the same thing I was. We all had the same ideas in our interpretation of it. We all didn't tie the tie all the way; our sleeves were rolled and wore some version of Chuck Taylors.

Rose and Alice came out of the bedroom, with a contrite Bella following them. She obviously not happy with what Alice dressed her in. I, on the other hand, loved it. She looked fucking amazing. She was wearing a red halter dress with black polka dots. Her hair was smoothed into curls and had a large black flower over her right ear. On her feet, were a pair of high black Mary Jane shoes and some black tights. If I was a betting man that was the reason why Bella was pissed. Bella never liked heels.

"Alice, why is Bella wearing heels? We're going to be onstage for a couple of hours," I began, diplomatically.

"If she wears flats, it'll ruin the whole look," Alice whined.

"I'm taking comfort over looks, right now, Pixie," Bella said. She darted into the bedroom and returned, wearing a pair of black flats. "Much better."

## La Cantante

"Fine. I guess *those* will have to do," Alice snorted, rolling her eyes.

"We're all set up at Eclipse, Edward. Emmett and I went there this afternoon, as soon as we got your text. Kellan was nearly jumping out of his skin when we were there. Suffice it to say, he's excited," Jasper said with a quirked brow.

"We're 'money makers,'" I joked. "Let's head over there and do a sound check."

We all put on our coats and headed down to our respective cars. Bella drove and followed Emmett to Eclipse. I didn't want to hassle with my glasses tonight and so she would be my 'eyes.' We did our quick sound check and adjusted a few levels. We also ran a piece that we struggled with during rehearsal. We went into the green room and waited for our time to head on stage. We all did our pre-show rituals and had our prayer. We heard Kellan's voice come through the loudspeakers, announcing us. The crowd went absolutely crazy. We moved quickly to our instruments and settled in to play our set.

We decided to do a love theme for the show tonight, as it was Eclipse's Valentine's Day celebration. We began our set with "Lonely No More," by Rob Thomas. The crowd swayed and cheered as we sang. We finished our first song and moved through our set. About halfway, I picked up my acoustic guitar and sat down on a stool. I was sweating something awful, but I knew it was because of being sick earlier. I leaned forward to my microphone, "This is for my love of my life," I said smoothly. I looked back at Bella and gave her my signature smirk.

Her eyes lit up and she responded with mouthing "I love you."

Jasper picked up his acoustic and sat down next to me. We began the introduction to "Amazed" and all the women gave a collect sigh and swoon.

*Every time our eyes meet  
This feeling inside me  
Is almost more than I can take  
Baby when you touch me  
I can feel how much you love me*

## La Cantante

*And it just blows me away*

*I've never been this close to anyone or anything  
I can hear your thoughts  
I can see your dreams*

*I don't know how you do what you do  
I'm so in love with you  
It just keeps getting better  
I wanna spend the rest of my life  
With you by my side  
Forever and ever  
Every little thing that you do  
Baby I'm amazed by you*

*The smell of your skin  
The taste of your kiss  
The way you whisper in the dark  
Your hair all around me  
Baby you surround me  
You touch everyplace in my heart  
Oh it feels like the first time every time  
I wanna spent the whole night in your eyes*

*Every little thing that you do  
I'm so in love with you  
It just keeps getting better  
I wanna spend the rest of my life  
With you by my side  
Forever and ever  
Every little thing that you do  
Oh, every little thing that you do  
Baby I'm amazed by you*

After we finished the song, the crowd roared. Bella had moved from behind the keyboard and was standing next to me. She reached up and gently caressed my

## La Cantante

sweaty cheek. She leaned forward and whispered in my ear, "I'm amazed by you, Edward. Thank you so much. I love you."

She pulled away and looked at me sheepishly. I stood up and ran my fingers down her jaw and she shivered. I kissed her forehead and smiled against her skin. "I meant every word, Bella. You are the most amazing woman I've ever met. I love you."

We pulled away from each other and finished our set. The audience was really into our show and it pumped us up. We finished our set with "Meant to Live" by Switchfoot. As the final chord rang out, I leaned into the microphone, "Thank you everyone. Happy Valentine's Day." The lights cut out and we exited the stage. We moved back into the green room. As soon as the doors were closed, I collapsed onto the couch, completely spent. I looked down at my body and my red shirt was almost burgundy as I was sweating like a pig. Yuck.

Kellan knocked on the door as he entered the room. "Great set tonight, guys. I'm so happy that you are back!"

"Thanks, Kellan," Jasper said. "It's good to be back."

"Bella, I heard about your accident. How are you doing, honey?" Kellan asked, his face etched with concern.

"Better and stronger every day," she replied.

"Excellent. Leave your equipment here tonight and you can pick it up tomorrow. I'll see you then. Your usual spots in the VIP lounge are set up," Kellan said with a huge grin.

"I don't know about you guys, but I'm needing to go back home and shower," I said as I plucked at my shirt. "Then, bed."

"Are you alright, Edward?" Kellan asked.



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"Yeah, I'm getting over the stomach flu. I'm not a 100%. That's why I look like a sweaty mess," I said, wrinkling my nose.

"And you stink, baby. Sorry," Bella giggled.

"I can only imagine," I laughed. "I feel pretty ripe."

"So, next week, it's just going to be you guys?" Kellan asked.

"Yeah. Bella is going to be away for the weekend," Emmett explained.

"Cool. Well, if you want to stay, the VIP lounge is yours. If not, I'll see you next Friday," he said as he consulted his blackberry.

"See you then, Kellan," Jasper responded. Kellan left the room as did Emmett and Jasper.

Bella sat down opposite of me on the chair near the couch. I groaned into a cushion. "If I could invent a transporter to get us home instantaneously, that would be awesome. I'm exhausted. I probably shouldn't have gone up there tonight."

"No, but I'm proud of you that you did," Bella said with a shy smile. "We didn't rehearse 'Amazed.' When did you add it?"

"I texted Emmett when you were sleeping this morning, asking to add it if we performed. As I've said before, you are amazing, astonishing, remarkable..."

"Okay, Edward. So are you. You are amazingly stinky. Let's go home and get you showered," she teased. "We are so driving back with the windows open."

"Bella," I whined.

"I'm kidding, Edward. Quit being a big baby," she giggled. She held out my coat and slipped hers over her shoulders. I grabbed my coat from Bella's hand, pulling her to me by her wrist. She yelped and I wrapped my arms around her.

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She looked up at me, running her fingers through my damp hair. I leaned down and kissed her soft lips. She moaned and fisted her hands in my hair. She tugged gently and moved my head away, her nose was wrinkled. "I'm not kissing you until you've showered, Stinkward."

I pouted and Bella pulled away, snickering. She laced her fingers through mine and we walked to the car. I watched her as she moved and her shoulders were pulled back, confident. She looked over her shoulder and she winked at me. I was truly amazed by this creature. I was amazed by her beauty, by her intelligence, her compassion, and most importantly, amazed by her love. And she was mine.

**A/N: Breaking Midnight's set list:**

**Lonely No More - Rob Thomas**

**Angel - Sarah McLachlan**

**Her Eyes - Pat Monahan**

**Love Song - Sara Barellis**

**Never Too Late - Three Days Grace**

**At Last - Etta James**

**Amazed - Lonestar**

**Lucky - Jason Mraz**

**You Gave Love a Bad Name - Bon Jovi**

**Love is a Battlefield - Pat Benatar**

**Crash - Dave Matthews Band**

**18 Wheeler - Pink**

**You and Me - Lifehouse**

**Meant to Live - Switchfoot**

# Valentine's Day

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 67: Valentine's Day

### BPOV

I love Edward. I really do. However, he is stinky tonight. He was very sheepish when we got into his car as we drove back to our apartment after the Valentine's Day show at Eclipse. I cracked a window. Edward gave me the stink eye and I just shrugged. He knew he was ripe. He had soaked through his shirt that he wore for the gig tonight. He was sick and I completely understand. That doesn't mean that I have to *smell* him. Usually he smells so good, but sheesh tonight, not so much.

We made it home in record time. My speeding helped matters. Edward and I went upstairs and I shoved him into the bathroom. He snorted but moved easily into the bathroom. I went into the other bathroom and washed my face and removed the huge flower from my hair. I walked back into the bedroom and went into my drawer of lingerie. I wanted to wear something that would make Edward happy. He felt so horrible yesterday and I felt guilty not being with him in *that* way since my accident two weeks ago. I found a deep purple nightie that had more lace than satin and a pair of barely there panties. I lit a few candles in the bedroom and lay down on the bed, waiting for Edward to come out of the shower. A few moments later, Edward exited the shower, wearing only a towel. He dropped his clothes into the hamper and he directed his attention to me. His eyes immediately darkened and his mouth fell slightly. I turned onto my side and ran my hand up and down my leg.

"Fuck me," Edward whispered.

"Not yet, baby," I purred as I moved my hand to the swell of my breast. "I want to make you feel good."

Edward gulped and walked over to the bed. His hair was wet, looking almost brown. His green eyes were filled with lust and love. I got up onto my knees and gently cupped his cheeks. I stared into his eyes and caressed his skin with my fingertips. He released the hold of the towel and heard it drop to the floor. He was gloriously naked in front of me and his cock was springing to life. I moved my hands down his arms and pulled him onto the bed. He moved onto the bed easily and gave me a seductive growl. I gently pushed him onto the pillows on our bed. I ran my fingers across his lips and he sighed. I straddled his legs and I leaned forward. I brushed my lips against his, just barely. He tried to capture my mouth, but I pulled away.

"Bella," he whispered. "Please." His hand snaked up my back and gripped my neck. I smirked at him seductively. I eventually leaned forward and traced my tongue across his lips. His mouth opened and I thrust my tongue into his mouth. I moaned and twisted my hands into his hair. His arms wrapped around my waist and held me close to his body. "I want to feel you, Bella."

"You first, handsome. I want to taste you," I said as I kissed my way down his perfect body. "Every inch of your body, your cock, everything, Edward."

I reached his chest and I licked his nipples, pulling them between my teeth. Edward moved his hands to my ass and he felt that I was wearing barely-there underwear. He growled and he tried, in vain to touch me. I moved away. I wanted to pleasure him, like he did me last week. I continued my sexual assault of his body with my tongue and my teeth. I reached his cock and I licked the tip. Edward hissed and rotated his hips. I cocked an eyebrow and licked the tip again, this time adding my hands to his shaft. "Bella, please," he begged. I took his dick into my mouth and swirled my tongue along the head. Edward began to breathe heavily and I watched him as he came undone. His eyes were wild and his muscles rippled as I licked his perfect dick. With my hands, I pumped in conjunction with my mouth.

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Edward reached for my face and he gently caressed my cheek as I bobbed my head. I removed his cock from my mouth, but still pumped with my hands, never breaking eye contact. "You are so beautiful, Edward."

He smiled crookedly and cupped my face. "That would be you, my love," he whispered. I smiled and pulled his cock back into my mouth. I closed my eyes and took him as deep as my mouth would allow. His hips bucked and he grabbed my hair quite forcefully. I ran my teeth along the bottom of his shaft and his body began to tense. He was close. "Bella...I'm...fuck!" He stared at me and I kept eye contact, sending my love for him with my eyes. With my hand, I grasped the base of his cock and moved faster. His dick twitched and a hot spray was sent down my throat. I swallowed all of what he had to offer and kept my lips on his cock until he was done. I removed my mouth, pressing feather-like kisses on his dick and up his body. "Bella, you are amazing. I love you, so much," Edward said, out of breath.

I settled next to him and kissed his neck, right on his pulse point. "I love you, too, Edward. Feel good?"

"Definitely. However, I'm exhausted," he said sleepily. He looked at me guiltily.

"Edward tonight was all about you," I giggled. "No need to reciprocate. You're getting over the stomach flu."

He let out a breath and visibly relaxed. "Rain check, beautiful?"

"I'm counting on it," I giggled.

Edward crawled under the covers and I blew out the candles. I removed my contacts and settled in next to my love. He was almost asleep when I came to bed. I laid my head on his chest and kissed it, above his heart. He hummed and idly played with my hair.

"Bella?" he asked sleepily.

"Yes, handsome?"

"Yesterday, you were humming something when I was napping. What was it?" Edward asked, cracking open an eye.

"Um, it's something *I'm* working on. I'll share it with you when I'm done," I said. Edward hadn't known that while I was off that week from school after my accident, I was working on this composition for him. I took elements from my lullaby that he composed and was creating something for the both of us. I had about half of it done. I hummed the main theme for it as he was going to sleep.

"Okay, beautiful. I love you. Good night," Edward mumbled. He wrapped his arms around me and nuzzled my hair. I moved closer and my eyes drifted shut.

xx LC xx

Edward and I woke up relatively early this next morning. We were meeting with Angela's dad, Pastor Webber, at his church at one in the afternoon. He already said that he would do our wedding for us, but we still wanted to meet with him. Edward and I worked on our psychology project, creating two more assessments. We really worked well together. We played off each other's strengths. Edward was definitely a 'black and white' kind of guy. I was more 'shades of gray.' We were able to use each other's thoughts to create the assessments for interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences.

We then decided to get ready for our meeting with Pastor Webber. I showered first and took my blow dryer into the other bathroom so Edward could get ready. I finished putting on my makeup and went into the closet. I chose a very demure dress that was black and purple. I slipped on my black ballet flats. Edward was wearing a pair of khakis and a navy blue button down shirt. I grabbed the directions that Angela gave me to her father's church and we headed down to the car. The church was approximately halfway between Emerson and Edward's home. We managed to get there in a little under a half hour. We pulled up to a sleek, modern looking church. We parked and got out of the car. Edward laced his fingers with mine and we walked into the sanctuary.

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Pastor Webber said for us to go to the rear of the church and behind the altar to find his office. It felt weird just walking in but we did it. Edward stepped behind me and we found Pastor Webber's office. I gently knocked on his door. I heard a faint "Come in." I opened the door and found an older man sitting behind a desk filled with a ton of papers. He had black hair with gray hair scattered throughout. He also had a full beard and round glasses.

"Pastor Webber?" I asked, tentatively.

"Yes, that's me. You must be Isabella and Edward," he said kindly. He stepped around his desk and held out his hand, shaking our hands. "Welcome to my church. Come, have a seat," he said gesturing to the couch in his office.

Edward and I settled onto the tiny couch as Pastor Webber sat down in the matching chair. "So, you two are getting married. Congratulations, first off."

"Thank you, sir," Edward said politely.

"Why don't you tell me a bit about yourselves?" Pastor Webber said warmly.

Edward and I told him about each other. I was never comfortable talking about myself. However, this is the man who is going to *marry me* to my love. He needs to know about us.

"So, now I know a little bit about you and how you met. We need to discuss a few things about the wedding," Pastor Webber said.

"Like what?" I asked.

"Well, what are your religious affiliations?"

"I was baptized Catholic, but I haven't been to a Catholic church in years," Edward said. "When we do to go to church, it's usually a Methodist church."

"I consider myself a Christian, but don't really affiliate myself with one specific church," I replied.



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"So, do you want a Christian ceremony?" Pastor Webber asked.

Edward and I looked at each other and nodded. "While it's important to us to share our bond with our families and God, it's more about us coming together as a couple," Edward said.

"So, Christian ceremony, light on the 'God' stuff," Pastor Webber chuckled.

"Yeah. Not to be disrespectful, though," Edward said quickly.

"Edward, you are being FAR from disrespectful. You two are possibly the nicest couple I've worked with in my years as a pastor. It's amazing that you two found each other at such a young age. I can feel the love emanating from you and it is a blessing," Pastor Webber said wisely. "Do you want readings?"

"I really like 'Love is patient,'" I responded.

"That's a good one. Very popular," Pastor Webber smiled. "Do you want to do some type of unity candle?"

"A unity candle and a memoriam," Edward said.

"Who would you like to honor?" Pastor Webber asked.

"My mother. She passed away when I was nine," Edward explained. "Bella has been the first and only person to fill that emptiness in my heart since her death."

"You must be very special, Bella. I am so happy that you two found each other," Pastor Webber said kindly.

Both Edward and I blushed. I gave Pastor Webber a shy smile. Edward squeezed my fingers and gently caressed my cheek.

"So, I want you both to do some homework. I want to meet with you again in a few months. For your homework, I want you to write down, in a narrative

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form, when you knew you loved each other. The exact moment. Email it to me. Here's my card," Pastor Webber said as he handed us his card. Edward took it and put it in his wallet. "Usually, couples have the exact same moment for when they fell in love."

"When do you want us to come in next?" Edward asked as he looked at me with love and devotion.

"How about April," Pastor Webber suggested. "When I receive both of your emails, I'll contact you to set up our next meeting. I look forward to marrying you and working with you in this journey."

"So do we, Pastor Webber," I said with a huge smile.

"Tell Angie I say hello and that I love her," Pastor Webber replied with a grin. "It was lovely to meet both of you. Contact me if you have any questions."

Edward reached and shook Pastor Webber's hand and I did the same. We headed back out of the sanctuary and walked to our car. We drove to New Moon, the American Grille that we had gone to earlier in the year. Edward wanted to take me out and he wanted a steak. He had finally got his appetite back from the stomach flu and he needed to refuel. He attacked his steak like Emmett would. His eyes darkened like they do when he's turned on and I nearly fell out of my chair in hysterics. He quirked a brow and I sobered up. Edward inhaled his steak and half of my meal of tilapia. I teased him that he was doing his 'Emmett' impression. Edward growled and said if I kept it up, I'd be walking home. I rolled my eyes but stopped my teasing.

After dinner, Edward drove us back to our home and parked the car. We both had to complete our assignment for music theory. It was an easy assignment, but we both forgot to do it. We spent the majority of the night completing the homework and then watched some television. Edward asked me to help him choose something to wear for his first meeting with the choirs while he was working with Garrett. I got up and picked out a pair of black dress pants, dark gray dress shirt and a black tie. He nodded and kissed me fervently.

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We went to bed early and watched some television in the bedroom. Edward lightly scratched my back as we watched the tail-end of a movie. I was nearly out when he turned off the television. He gently removed my glasses and kissed my lips. "Love you, beautiful."

"I love you, too, Edward. So sleepy," I mumbled. He chuckled and turned off the lights. He slipped between the covers and I curled up against his muscular chest. Edward wrapped his arms around me and kissed the crown of my head. I kissed right above his heart and settled into a deep, restful sleep.

xx LC xx

I woke up before the alarm and decided to make Edward breakfast. I tiptoed to the kitchen and got the ingredients for pancakes. I made the batter and pulled out the griddle. I made a stackful of heart-shaped pancakes, in honor of Valentine's Day. Edward always goes above and beyond when it comes to presents and holidays and it was my turn to do it to him. I also made some breakfast sausages and fresh fruit. I put the pancakes, fruit and sausages onto a tray, along with a cup of coffee and orange juice and carried it into the bedroom. I placed the tray on the dresser and I walked to Edward's side of the bed. He was on his stomach with one arm hanging over the edge of the bed and his mouth slightly open. I knelt in front of him and ran my fingers through his hair, pushing his bronze tresses off his beautiful face. He wrinkled his nose and turned his head the other way. I giggled and began scratching his back, running my fingertips along the muscles of his shoulders. "Wake up, handsome," I cooed. "I have a surprise for you."

"Are you naked?" he mumbled into the pillow.

"No," I laughed.

"Can you be?" he replied, not moving.

"Edward," I warned. He turned his face back toward me and gave me a lopsided grin.

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"What? Can you blame me for wanting to see my beautiful fiancée in her birthday suit on Valentine's Day?" he teased.

"You are a perv," I said, rolling my eyes. "Sit up, handsome."

He arched a brow and gently ran his thumb across my bottom lip. He heaved himself off the bed and rolled over onto his back, grabbing a pillow that he tossed on the floor. I went and got the tray of breakfast and placed it over his legs. "Happy Valentine's Day, Edward," I said, pulling my lower lip into my teeth.

"You made me breakfast in bed?" he asked, his voice filled with awe.

"You've done it for me, so turnabouts' fair play," I giggled. "Eat up. Enjoy your heart pancakes."

"Bella, this is wonderful," he said softly. "Thank you."

"You're quite welcome," I said, kissing his cheek. I turned and began heading back into the kitchen to clean up the mess I made.

"Where are you going, beautiful?" he asked his mouth full of pancakes.

"To clean up the kitchen," I said, stopping by the door and leaning against it.

"Nuh uh. No way. I'm getting the kitchen. Sit with me," Edward said, looking at me through his lashes and giving me a shy smile. "Please?"

"Since you said please," I snorted. I walked back to the bed and sat down next to him. I swiped a breakfast sausage and nibbled on it. Even the breakfast was for him, Edward fed me a few bites of pancakes and fruit. His eyes were trained on my lips as I ate the food.

Edward finished his breakfast and put the tray on the floor. He then pushed me on the bed, pinning me with his body. "That was the best breakfast, ever," he purred. "I love you, beautiful."

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"I love you, too, Edward," I whispered. I gently ran my fingers down his warm cheek and pulled him to my lips. He caressed my lips with his and moaned. My hands fisted into his soft hair and I opened my mouth. Edward's tongue moved languidly with mine and his hands moved to my breasts. "Edward," I mumbled against his lips.

"Hmmm?" he asked, moving his lips to my neck.

"We have to go to class," I said, my eyes rolling back in my head. I didn't want him to stop. He felt so good.

"Fuck class," he growled. "I want to spend the day with you, in bed."

"Edward Anthony," I chided. He sucked on my collarbones, licking along my skin. He hummed against my chest and his hands flicked my nipples. We definitely needed to stop. I pulled on Edward's hair, removing his soft lips from my body. "We. Have. To. Go. To. Class," I said, punctuating each word with a kiss.

"Ugh, fine. Can we at least shower together? Conserve water?" he asked, wagging his brows.

"No funny business, but yes," I giggled. Edward hopped out of bed and I could see his erection in his boxers. He leaned down and scooped me up off the bed, bridal style. We both showered and I helped Edward with his 'morning wood.' He was eternally grateful.

I decided that tonight, we'd try to make love. I felt fine when I went down on him the other night and if I stayed on top, my ribs wouldn't bother me. However, Edward doesn't know this. He'll be surprised when he gets back from observation hours. I am going to a shop with Alice and Rose today after University Singers to get Edward his second half of his Valentine's day present. His first present was my own promise ring to him. I got him a Claddaugh in sterling silver for him to wear on his right hand. I got it when I went shopping with Emmett. He was my 'hand model.' Emmett's hands were bigger than Edward's and I figured if it fit on Emmett's pinky, it should fit on Edward's ring

finger.

Edward got dressed and I curled my hair, fingering some mousse into my long, chestnut tresses. I applied my makeup and put on my contact lenses. When I got out of the bathroom, Edward was not in the bedroom. I heard him in the kitchen, putting the breakfast mess away. I smiled and went into the closet. I put on a pair of black dress pants and a deep pink sweater and a lacy camisole. Underneath my clothes, I had on a very skimpy pair of black underwear and lacy black bra. I put on my crest and a pair of silver earrings, along with my engagement ring and promise ring. These would never come off my fingers, except to shower. I finished my look with my boots. I sprayed on some perfume and Edward came into the bedroom. He was in his dress pants and black undershirt. He had yet to put on his dress shirt and tie for his observation hours. He was leaving after psychology. Alice gave him an extra set of her car keys on Saturday before she left for Eclipse. Edward slipped on his shirt and quickly buttoned it, tucking it into his dress pants. He deftly put his tie on and he looked absolutely stunning. My mouth watered at his beauty.

"Bella?"

"God, you're gorgeous," I blurted. I snapped my hands over my mouth and my eyes got as big as saucers.

"Thanks," he laughed. "You are exquisite, beautiful, enchanting, gorgeous, and intelligent. However, are you ready to go?"

"Sorry," I giggled nervously.

"Why are you apologizing?" Edward asked, with a lopsided smirk. "I'm glad you like the way that I look. I must be doing something right."

"Oh, baby, you do everything right," I murmured. "But, yes, I'm ready to go."

I turned and went into the office to get my bag. I checked to see if I had all of my books and my assignment for theory. Edward held out my jacket and I slipped my arms through the sleeves. He took our bags and put them over his

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shoulder and we went down to the car. I was driving as I had to go see Dr. Lunes today. We moved up our appointment to one so I could get ready for Valentine's day and go shopping with Rose and Alice. Edward and I got into the Volvo and drove to campus. I parked on the street in one of the commuter spots. We walked into theory and sat through a boring lecture after we turned in our assignments. Victoria was not in class, thankfully. Her lustful stares at my fiancé were really starting to piss me off. If she squeezes together her boobs one more time, I'm going to kill her. He's mine, bitch. I'm wearing the insanely expensive engagement ring. Not you.

Edward and I walked slowly to psychology, hand in hand. He was being extra attentive and affectionate. Subtle brushes of his knuckles across my cheek, a kiss on the forehead, nibbling my earlobe while whispering about what he planned on doing to me tonight, and loving stares. I will never tire of his affection or his love. I'd never thought I could have a relationship like this, where a man literally and figuratively worshipped me. I felt the same way about Edward. I worshipped him. He was a God, my God.

During psychology, I did my share of covert flirtations. As we watched a video about Freud, I lay my hand on Edward's leg. I traced circles on his inner thigh. I moved my gentle caresses higher up his leg to where I brushed over his straining erection. He placed his large hand over mine and gave me a warning with his eyes. I feigned innocence and he silently scoffed. As Hafenrichter had his back turned, Edward leaned over and gave me a searing kiss that made my toes curl. He pulled away and his eyes were dark with passion. He smirked and leaned back in his chair, satisfied with himself. When psychology ended, Edward walked me to the science building before he ran off to get Alice's car.

"You are a tease, Isabella," he said as we left psychology. "Get me all hot and bothered like that. Damn woman!"

"So are you, Edward," I admonished.

"I think I've told you this before, but it's not as *obvious* when I tease you. I get a bulge in my pants when you tease me. I seriously hope you plan on following through on all of your little caresses and flirtatious looks because if you aren't,

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I'm going to explode," Edward whined.

"You will not be disappointed, Edward. Trust me," I said. "I'll have you screaming my name, handsome. Begging for more."

"Fuck me," Edward breathed as he pulled me flush to his body. "I want to take you back to our apartment and have my wicked way with you. You are so fucking sexy, Bella."

"Tonight, handsome," I whispered. "I'm going to have you tonight."

"Really?" Edward asked, his eyes becoming unfocused. "I'm going to make love to my amazing fiancée tonight."

"If you'll have me," I replied, kissing his soft lips.

"Always, beautiful. I love you, *il mio cantante*," he whispered. "I'm so lucky to have you."

"I love you more, handsome. Say hi to Garrett for me," I said as I nibbled along his jaw. "Have fun."

"I will. Good luck with Dr. Lunes," he said as he pulled my hips flush with his. I could feel his arousal against my stomach. "I've been like that all morning. I can't wait until tonight. I'll call you on my way home."

"Later, handsome," I said with a brief, but passionate kiss. He moaned as he pulled away, adjusting his cock as he jogged to Rathburn. He gave me a wave over his shoulder and he winked before I went into the science building.

Biology was interesting today. Dr. Haddon actually gave an interesting lecture about the physiological responses to romance, intimacy and sex. I actually got a few ideas for my present for Edward during the lecture and Alice was all too happy to help out. Due to the interesting topic, biology actually flew by and before we knew it, class was dismissed. Alice and I walked to University Singers and I found my mind drifting about tonight. I was so excited about this



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evening. I could feel it in my heart, in my mind and in my panties.

"So, Bella, are we still going to Lover's Layne?" Alice asked, bouncing on her toes.

"Definitely. I want to make Edward a very happy man tonight," I said with a lascivious grin.

"What do you have in mind?" Alice responded, her eyes gleaming.

"There's something about Edward being the dominator and being dominated that gets me all riled up," I said.

"I think you need to dominate him," Alice said darkly. "Trust me?"

"Of course, Alice," I giggled. "What's going on in your mind?"

"Edward will not be disappointed. We are so going to have fun," Alice squealed. "What time are you picking up me and Rose?"

"My appointment is at one, so about a quarter after two?" I responded.

"Perfect. I want to get some provisions for tonight too," Alice said with a wicked grin. "Jasper will also be a happy man."

I looked at my friend, my sister and smiled. We walked into the choir room in Brandon and settled into our seats. For our rehearsal today, it was a review. We practiced our 'non-Christmas' music from our first concert and several pieces that we learned for our upcoming concert. These pieces were going to be used during our tour of Italy after the end of the school year.

Eleazar released us a bit early and I drove to Dr. Lunes' office. This was the first time that I went to her office without Edward. He was my security blanket, but I needed to do this. I signed in at the front desk and waited to be called. Dr. Lunes came out and gave me a pleasant smile. She ushered me into her office. When I sat down, she handed me a large chocolate heart.

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"Happy Valentine's Day, Bella," she said with a smile.

"Thank you, Dr. Lunes," I said sheepishly. She gave me a playful glare.

"Stephenie. Happy Valentine's Day to you, too. This looks good."

"You're welcome. How are you doing, Bella?" she asked.

"I'm good. I've started journaling. However, I'm doing it in like I'm writing a story. I need to distance myself from the pain and when I think of it like a story, it makes it a bit easier to tolerate," I said.

"Your journal is up to you. If that's how you want to work it, then I support you," Stephenie replied. "So tell me, what happened this past week."

"Things were pretty quiet. However, Edward got the stomach flu on Friday. I felt so badly for him," I replied. "I didn't know what to do, so I called his dad."

"How did Edward react to that?" Stephenie asked.

"He wasn't very happy that I did it, but I think he was grateful when I gave him his anti-nausea medication. He got some sleep on Friday afternoon because of it. I did have to go to Super Target to get his prescription, though," I answered.

"How did you handle that?"

"Not well, honestly. I knew I had to get Edward's medication. I prayed I wouldn't have a panic attack while I was there. I was close," I whispered.

"How close were you to having a panic attack?" Stephenie pressed. "How did you cope?"

"Well, I knew I had to do this for Edward. I closed my eyes and imagined the place where I feel the safest."

"Where's that?"

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"In Edward's arms with my head listening to his heart," I answered. "I took a few deep breaths and went into the store. I walked to the pharmacy and asked if they received a call for Edward Cullen and they said that it would be ready in ten minutes. I wanted to just run out of there, but I didn't. Instead, I got some things that I know Edward needed if he was sick. I got Gatorade, ginger ale, saltines, and 'sick pajamas.'"

"What are 'sick pajamas?'" Stephenie giggled.

"Whenever I feel gross, I always put on a pair of old Garfield pajamas. My dad got them for me when I had mono in high school. They are the most comfortable things ever. Anyhow, I found a pair of men's Garfield pajama bottoms and I got them for Edward. Now we have matching 'sick pajamas,'" I explain with a rueful smile.

"That's cute," Stephenie said with a grin. "Did Edward appreciate his pajamas?"

"I think so. He was so sick that he was barely coherent when I came home. He was curled up around the toilet, poor thing," I said with a frown.

"The stomach flu is not fun," Stephenie said with a wrinkled nose. "How did it feel to take care of Edward?"

"It felt good. I needed to take care of him. He has been so attentive and amazing the past few weeks. I needed to show him that if he was sick or hurt that I would help him. It's not just one-sided. You know?"

"I know. I'm assuming he's all better?"

"Yeah. It was a twenty-four hour bug. He was okay on Saturday afternoon and back to normal on Sunday," I said with a smile. "We went to New Moon and he ordered the biggest steak and inhaled it."

"I'm glad he's feeling better. Is he here today?"

## La Cantante

"No, he's starting his observation hours for his education class," I explained.

Stephenie nodded and gave me a smile. "How are you feeling otherwise?"

"I'm definitely feeling more like myself. More like how I was before I was with Jacob. I still have these lingering feelings of self-doubt but I need to realize that I'm not that person. I never was that person. Jacob created her with his words," I said quietly.

"Excellent. Now, one more question. What are you doing for Edward for Valentine's Day?" Stephenie asked with a wicked grin. "Anything special?"

"I'm going shopping with Alice and Rosalie after my appointment here," I said. "They were my roommates before I lived with Edward. And we're going to Lover's Layne to get some 'provisions.'"

"Are you planning on making love with Edward tonight, Bella? Do you feel like you're ready?"

"Physically, I'm still sore. I think we can do it, though. Emotionally, I need to reconnect with Edward in *that* way. We've rebuilt our intimacy slowly these past two weeks and it feels right," I answered honestly.

"What happens if it doesn't happen tonight? Will Edward be upset? Will you?"

"Will Edward be upset? Probably, but will it make him love me any less? No. Will I be upset? Probably because I'm horny," I giggled. "Will it make me love him any less? Definitely not!"

"You've made significant strides in the past few weeks, Bella. I'm so proud of you," Stephenie said with a huge smile. "Let's schedule our next appointment for two weeks from today. Our office is closed next week due to the President's Day holiday. Do you want this time or will three work for you?"

"Three is better," I answered.

## La Cantante

Stephenie marked it down in her planner and led me out of her office. "Have a fun Valentine's Day and I'll see you in two weeks."

I smiled and walked out to the receptionist. I took out my debit card and gave her my name. She smiles and tells me that I'm all good. I furrow my brows. Now I know it was not Edward who paid. "Can you tell me who is paying my fees?"

"Dr. Cullen has arranged for payment of your treatment, Miss Swan. Have a great Valentine's Day," she smiles.

"Thank you," I sputter. I put my debit card back into my wallet and head out to the car. I reach for my phone call Carlisle.

"Dr. Carlisle Cullen's office. How can I help you?"

"I would like to speak with Dr. Cullen, please," I asked weakly.

"Are you patient?" the receptionist asked.

"Um, no. This is his daughter-in-law?" I respond.

"Hold on, please."

I wait on hold for a few moments. I listen to the music as it's piped through the tiny speakers of my phone. I nibble on my finger, waiting for Carlisle to pick up.

"Bella?" Carlisle asks. "Is everything alright? Is Edward still sick?"

"No, Carlisle. He's fine. It was a twenty-four hour bug," I answer. "I'm sorry to bother you, but I want to thank you."

"For what, sweetheart?" he asked kindly.

## La Cantante

"For paying for my treatment with Dr. Lunes," I said quietly. "I'm very grateful."

"Bella, you have been through an amazing ordeal and need help. Dr. Lunes is the best and I want to take care of my family. You are my family," Carlisle said. "It's no big deal."

"I kept thinking that Edward was paying for the treatments, but he didn't come with me today. When the receptionist said that my session was paid for, I asked her who did pay. She told me that it was you," I replied. "Thank you."

"Bella, as you told my receptionist, you're my daughter-in-law. For all intents and purposes, you are my daughter. Your health and well-being are of utmost importance. We love you, sweetheart."

"I can see where Edward gets his generosity," I giggle.

"It's definitely a Cullen 'male' trait. I spoil all the women in my life. Edward has inherited it as well," Carlisle laughs. "Unfortunately, Bella, I have to cut this short. I have an appointment in a few moments. I hope you and Edward have a great Valentine's Day. Love you, sweetie."

"Thank you, Carlisle. Have a wonderful Valentine's Day. Send my love to Esme. Love you, too," I said with a smile. "Bye!"

"Bye, Bella." He clicked off the phone and I end the call on my end. I shake my head and decide to send Edward a text about who paid for my sessions.

*I figured out who's paying for my sessions with Dr. Lunes - B*

*Who? - E*

*Your dad - B*

*I thought as much. He's sneaky like that. I miss you baby - E*

## La Cantante

*I miss you too. Shouldn't you be watching Garrett or working on sectionals? - B*

*Plan period - E*

*Ah! Well, I'm off to run some errands. I'll see you when you get home. Love you! - B*

*Love you more, baby! - E*

I slip my phone into my purse after I sent a quick text to Alice, informing her that I was on my way to pick her and Rose up. When I pull up to Rathburn, they are waiting for me outside. Rose got into the passenger seat and Alice slipped into the backseat. Alice pulled out a piece of paper and it looks like a list.

"Alice, what is that?" I asked, very leery.

"Our plan. We can't go into this store without a plan," Alice replied, seriously.

"Do I want to know what's on this plan?" I asked nervously.

"No, Bella, you don't," Rose snickered. "She is insatiable."

"Shut it, Rose. You helped make the plan," Alice admonished.

"Yeah, okay, Pixie," Rose snorted. "I made *one* suggestion. ONE! You did the rest. You are the Sexy Fairy. Not me."

I giggle and pull into the parking lot of Lover's Layne. Alice nearly sprints out of the car and into the store. Rose and I are a bit more reserved. When we walk in, we're asked for our IDs. Apparently you need to be over eighteen to enter the store. The salesperson smiles and ushers us in. I look around and I'm shocked at what I see. I don't know what half of the stuff is. The other half, honestly, scares me. Nipple clamps? Anal beads? What have I gotten myself into?

## La Cantante

Alice tugs on my hand and drags me to a wall of vibrators and other sex toys. She is holding a basket and looking at the vibrators contemplatively. She reached up and plucked one off the wall and puts it into the basket. She turns to me and winks.

*Oh, good lord.*

I look at the other things on the wall and run my hands over a whip of some sort. It was black and has a ton of small leather straps, like a leather cheerleading pom pom. The salesperson approaches and asks me if I'm into BDSM. I shake my head no. I don't even know what that means. She then tells me that it provides a unique feel to your partner's body. She reaches up and picks up the flogger and asks me to roll up my sleeve. I look at her speculatively and she promises me that she won't hurt me. I do as she asks and she runs the smooth leather over my arm. It feels nice. She then lightly smacks my arm and it stings, but could feel pleasurable.

*Hmmm...I think I like it.*

I reach for the flogger and look at the price tag. Alice takes it from my hands and puts it into her basket.

*I guess we're getting it.*

I smile at the salesperson and thank her. Alice tugs on my hand again and drags me to the lingerie section.

"You have to get this, Bella! It'll be perfect on you," Alice squeals. She holds up a red and black corset top with matching thong and garter. "You can use your new flogger on Edward while wearing this."

"Alice, I don't know," I said.

"Do you trust me? Bella?" she asks, pleading with me.

"Yes, I do," I relent.



## La Cantante

"Great. You're a 34 B, right?" Alice asked. I nod and she searches through the rack. She finds my size, along with the thong and garter. She moves to another section and picks out a pair of black thigh high stockings and tosses them into basket. "We're good."

"Alice, you are *not* paying for all of this. The flogger is \$100!" I breathe.

"Nonsense," Alice replied, waving her hand dismissively. "You're going to get a lot more of this on your bachelorette party."

"Oh, lord," I mumble. Alice and I walk to the front of the store and we find Rose sitting in the front, with a bag in her lap. "What did you get?"

"Porn," Rose answered simply. "And a new vibrator. Old Faithful died."

"Sorry?" I squeaked.

"Have you ever used a vibrator, Bella?" Alice asked.

"Um, no. I never even touched myself before I met Edward. I was a bit of a prude," I blush.

"Not anymore. Corsets, floggers, thongs, vibrators...we are corrupting you," Alice giggled. "Or, Edward corrupted you."

Alice walked up to the counter and put the basket in front of the salesperson. She rings her up and puts her purchases into a bag. Alice gives the salesperson her credit card and signs the slip. Alice then turns and gives me the entire bag with a wicked smirk. I roll my eyes and take the bag. "Thank you, Alice."

"Let me know how he likes it," she whispered conspiratorially. "Wear your black pencil skirt and your red blouse. Edward will have a heart attack."

I nod and give her a smile.

"We have one more spot to go to," Alice said. "Bikini wax. All of us."

## La Cantante

Rose and I grumble, but it needed to be done. We get into the car and drive to the salon. We all endure our bikini waxes and walk out of the salon. I decided to get it all removed. I usually kept a small strip of hair, but I wanted it all gone. Edward will love it.

I dropped Rose and Alice off at Rathburn. They both wished me luck and darted into their dorm. I drove back to my apartment and parked Edward's car. I take my bag of goodies and messenger bag and head upstairs. I decide to take another shower and really spend time cleaning myself. I take extra care to shave my legs and under my arms. Afterward, I took out my lotion and slathered it all over my body. I put my robe on and blow dry my hair. When my hair is dry, I take out my curling iron and put huge loopy curls in my long hair. I applied my makeup. I evened out my skin with some light foundation and put some blush on my cheeks. I then attempted to do the smoky eye look. After I'm done, I look pretty damn hot and I'm in a fricking robe. I walk into the bedroom and look at the corset, thong and garter set. I'm a bit intimidated by it, but I tackle it. I put on the corset first. Thankfully the hook and eye closures are in the front. If they were in the back, I would have had an epic fail. The corset is a bit tight across my ribs, but it actually feels pretty good. I then put on my the garter belt and panties. I slide on the black silk stockings and attach them to the garter. I look at myself in the mirror and it doesn't look like me. I don't see Bella Swan. I see a sex goddess, with a tiny waist, buxom breasts and long legs. I take a quick glance at the clock and I hear my phone ringing. I scurry to answer my phone.

"Hello?"

"Hey baby, I'm on my way home," Edward said. I could his smile over the phone. "I'll be there in about a half hour."

"Did you just leave school?" I ask.

"I had to run some errands myself. Garrett let me go early, as he doesn't have a class during the last period of the day," Edward explained.

## La Cantante

"Oh, okay. I'll see you in a little bit," I purr. "I can't wait until I see you, handsome."

"Me neither, beautiful. Love you," he whispered.

"Love you, more," I replied. I smile and hang up the phone. I needed to get my ass in gear. I dart into the bedroom and pull out my black pencil skirt and the red blouse that Alice mentioned. I pulled the blouse over my shoulders and buttoned it up. My cleavage is quite enticing. The swell of my breasts are enhanced by the curves of the corset and the blouse and I can feel myself get turned on at what was going to happen tonight. I lick my lips and pull my skirt over my hips and slip on my black stiletto Mary Jane shoes. I light a few candles in the bedroom and I go into the bathroom and apply my lipstick. I decide to wear a dark red shade and my look is complete. I look like a sex goddess, ready to make my fiancé an incredibly happy man.

I take out the flogger and vibrator from the bag. I look and see what kind of batteries it takes and grab some from the linen closet. I put them into the vibrator and check to see if it works. It does. I put it in the drawer of the bedside table. I'm not sure if I'm ready to use that, but I do want to use the flogger. I leave it on the bed. I walk into the living room and set up my iPod on the sound dock. Some smooth, sensual jazz floats through the apartment and I take a seat on the couch. I take a few deep breaths and try to calm my erratically beating heart.

I then realize that I left Edward's present in my lingerie drawer in the dresser. I walk into the bedroom and go into my drawer. I pull out the tiny red bag and card that I chose for him. I move back into the living room and place the bag onto the coffee table. I cross my legs and nervously pump my foot to the beat of the song. Then I heard the door click.

*Edward's home.*

**A/N: Cliffhanger, sorry. But it's a good kind of cliffie...TRUST me :)**

# Feisty Bella, to the Extreme

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 68: Feisty Bella, to the Extreme

### EPOV

Bella is going to be the death of me. Holy crap. Her innocent little stares. The way she nibbles her lip. The way her doe eyes look up at me. The way she moves her hips. The fact that she made me breakfast in bed. That stunt she pulled in psychology.

*Holy fuck, that was hot!*

I wanted to drag her back to our apartment and make her feel amazing. However, I had a job to do. Damn it. When psychology was dismissed, I walked Bella to her biology class. Bella told me that she was ready to try and make love. I definitely wanted to call Garrett and tell him that I was sick. But the logical part of my brain told me otherwise.

*Good things come to those who wait. You can wait, Cullen. She'll be there when you get home. But it's far away.*

It took all of my will power and control to walk away after she told me that she was going to have me and make love to me. But I did it. I deserved a fucking medal. Anyhow, I went and got my midget sister's car and drove to do my observation of Garrett. He noticed that I was a bit distracted. He teased me that we should have chosen a different day to start my hours. Valentine's day was not the wisest decision on either of our parts. He was also distracted. His wife, who was pregnant, was placed on bed rest over the weekend and he was not

## La Cantante

really all there. After two classes, he let me leave, while giving me credit for being there for the whole time. I was so thankful. He said that the next time I come, be prepared to actually teach. I took the music he gave me for the groups and darted out of the school, waving good bye to Mrs. Cope.

Bella had texted me as I was driving to the mall. I was at a stoplight while we chatted. She informed me that it was Carlisle who was paying for her sessions with Dr. Lunes. She, then, razzed me about not teaching or doing sectionals. I told her that Garrett had a plan period.

I stopped at the mall on my way back to Emerson and picked up the charm that I wanted for Bella's bracelet. I found the 'strength' charm and also found another charm that fit her. It was an old-fashioned quill pen. She had spent a great deal of time writing in her journal and that also added to her strength. I paid for both charms and went to a florist. I had pre-ordered three dozen roses. A dozen of each in white, pink and purple. I picked them up, along with a romantic card.

I called Bella on my way home from the florist, saying I would be home in a half hour. I stopped at La Bella Italia and picked up the food. I sped back to Rathburn. Alice waited for me outside her dorm and she slid into the passenger seat. She had a wicked gleam in her eyes and smile on her face. She knew something, but I decided not push it. I pulled up to my apartment building and grabbed my bags from the backseat of the car. Alice hopped in the driver's side and gave me a wink as she drove off. I juggled the flowers, food and my messenger bag as I waited for the elevator. Alistair gave me a wave and I nodded at him. The elevator came, finally and I walked onto it. I pushed the button to the fourth floor. I balanced the flowers against the railing in the elevator and I pulled out my keys. The elevator doors opened and I walked down to my door and unlocked it.

My mind was assaulted by the smell of sandalwood candles and smooth, seductive jazz. I took a deep breath and smiled as I walked into my home. I went into the kitchen and put down the bag from La Bella Italia and walked into the living room. There was a fire lit in the fireplace and then I saw *her*.

*Holy fuck.*

I nearly dropped the flowers I was carrying in my arms. I quickly recovered and put the flowers on the table. I looked at my gorgeous fiancée and my dick hardened. She was standing in front of me, her hand on her hip and a seductive smirk on her face. She was wearing a tight black pencil skirt that flaunted her perfect curves. On top, she wore a red blouse that accentuated her breasts. Her cleavage was the predominant feature of the blouse. Her hair was curled and it hung over her shoulders. Her makeup was soft and smoky. I gulped and just stared at her.

"Do you like, Edward?" she asked, arching a perfect brow.

Afraid of my voice, I nodded. I licked my lips and ran my eyes over her body. She moved slowly toward me, swaying her hips. "Happy Valentine's Day, Edward," she purred as she ran her hands up my chest.

"Happy Valentine's Day, Bella. You're fucking gorgeous," I said huskily.

"Thank you, baby," she said as she played with my buttons of my shirt. "So are you. Are those for me?"

"Yes, beautiful. I know how much you liked them in Seattle," I said as I wrapped my arms around her tiny waist. "Do you want your present?"

"Edward, you didn't have to get me anything," she chided.

"I know. It's not a lot. I promise," I said as I kissed her nose. I pulled away from her and went into my messenger bag. I got the small gift bag with Bella's charms. I handed the bag to her and led her to the couch. She gave me a wary look. I grinned at her and caressed her cheek. She opened the bag and pulled out the tiny box. She opened it and smile radiantly.

"Oh, Edward! Thank you," she breathed. She darted and ran to get her bracelet. She got it from her jewelry box and clasped the newest charms to it. "I know what the pen is, but what's the other one?"

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"It's the Chinese symbol for strength. Bella, you are one of the strongest people that I know. Not physical strength, but mental and emotional strength. You are amazing and I'm honored to be a part of your life," I said quietly. "I love you, beautiful."

"I love you, too, handsome. Here's your present," she said, handing me a small red bag.

"Bella..."

"It's not a lot," she teased. "Open it."

I pulled out the tissue paper and found a small jewelry box inside. I quirked a brow and Bella poked me in the ribs. I opened the box and inside found a Claddaugh ring. My eyes filled with tears and I looked at her. "Bella, this is perfect."

"It's my promise to you. That I'll be your wife," she said quietly. She reached for the ring and pulled it out. She picked up my right hand and slipped the silver ring on my ring finger. It fit perfectly. "Do you like it, Edward?"

"I absolutely love it. It's never leaving my hand," I said reverently. "Thank you, beautiful."

I gently cupped her face and leaned down. I brushed my lips over hers. Bella sighed and moved closer to me, pressing her body against mine. I slipped my tongue between her soft lips and moved it languidly with hers. I pulled away and leaned my forehead against hers. "I have one more thing for us, beautiful."

"What, baby?"

"I got us dinner," I said as I got up. I gently pulled on her hands and led her to the kitchen. I sat her down at the table and took out two plates and dished out the food from La Bella Italia. I got us both lasagna and some tiramisu to share. Bella was bouncing in her seat, in an Alice-like fashion. I got a large pillar candle and lit it, placing it in the center of our kitchen table. I also opened up a

## La Cantante

bottle of red wine and poured both of us a glass. We dug into our food. Bella ate about half of her lasagna, deciding to save the rest of it for tomorrow. I finished mine. My appetite came back with a vengeance after my bout with the stomach flu.

Over dinner, Bella told me about her appointment with Dr. Lunes and her conversation with my dad. I told her about the goings-on at my high school. After dinner, Bella put her lasagna into a plastic container and took out the tiramisu. We took turns feeding each other the delicious dessert. We managed to finish the tiramisu. I was definitely stuffed. Almost uncomfortably so.

We sat down in the living room, Bella's head on my shoulder. She seemed to be very nervous. Her legs were crossed and her foot was jostling fretfully. "Baby, what's wrong?"

"Nothing, Edward," she answered quickly.

"Then, why is your foot causing an earthquake?" I teased.

She stopped moving her foot and started nibbling on her lip. I needed to calm her down. I gently caressed her cheeks and pulled her face to mine. I looked into her beautiful eyes, "I love you, Bella." I brushed my lips across her cheeks then moved them to her jaw. She moaned and grabbed my face. She bore into my eyes with hers. At first, I saw apprehension and fear. That quickly morphed into something different. Her eyes sparkled and became more confident, almost cocky.

She stood up and held her hand in front of me. I took it and she led me to the bedroom. Her hips swaying in a most enticing way. She looked over her shoulder coyly as we entered the dim bedroom. The only light was a few candles that were lit on the dresser and on the bedside table. Bella walked me to the armchair in our bedroom and pushed me down into it. I sat down and loosened my tie. Bella sauntered to the bed and picked up something off of it. It was black and a bunch of small straps on it. My eyes widened.

*Bella has a flogger. Holy shit.*



## La Cantante

She ran her fingers through the thin leather strips and her eyes darkened. "Do you know what this is, Edward?"

I nodded. My dick was straining in my pants. My breath was coming in shallow pants. This was amazing.

"Are you excited, Edward?" she asked, standing right in front of me, her hips cocked and toying with the flogger.

"Very much, Bella," I breathed. I looked up at her and stared into her eyes. She still had the look of confidence and she was ready to play.

*Feisty Bella is definitely hot. I like when she comes out.*

"Take off your shirt, Edward," she said quietly, but forcefully. She held out her hand and I gave her my tie. She put it over her neck. I assumed she was going to use it later. I quickly unbuttoned my shirt and put it on the floor.

"Undershirt, too." I whipped off my undershirt and it joined my dress shirt. She continued to play with the strands of the flogger. She flicked her wrist and the strands came in contact with my chest. It stung but it felt good. I hissed. Bella smiled and ran the flogger over my chest and shoulders. Every so often, she would smack my chest or back with the straps and it felt so good. My cock was ready to pop out of my pants.

Bella took my hand and pulled me up. "Remove my blouse, Edward," she commanded. She lowered her arms and put her hands on her hips. It was the sexiest thing I'd ever seen. I moved my fingers to the tiny buttons of her blouse. I unbuttoned each button, getting more and more aroused with each inch that was exposed. When the blouse was opened, I saw what she was wearing. I eased the blouse off her shoulders and she was wearing the hottest corset I'd ever seen. My eyes bugged out and I went to touch her. Bella smacked my chest with the flogger, harder than she had before. "I just said to remove my blouse. Not to touch. Do you need to be punished?"

I gulped and looked at her eyes. They were full of lust and passion. She was enjoying this. "No, Bella."

## La Cantante

"I'm not sure if I believe you," she chided. She smacked my chest again and I hissed. It felt good, but it shouldn't. But it did.

*Fuck, I'm talking in circles.*

"Take off your pants and underwear, Edward," she demanded. "Now."

I unbuckled my pants and slid them down my legs. I removed them, along with my socks. I eased my boxers off my body as well. Bella looked at my cock and she licked her lips. "You're so big, Edward. All mine," she said, darting her eyes to mine.

"Completely yours, Bella," I said fervently.

"Good. Take off my skirt," she said, her eyes darkening. She stood facing me. I moved to walk behind her, but she held up her hand. She looked at me and shook her head. I reached my arms around her waist and slowly unzipped the skirt. Her arms went over my shoulders. She ran the flogger slowly over my chest and shoulders, along with her fingertips. It felt amazing. Fucking perfect. I pushed the skirt down her legs and again my eyes bugged out their sockets. She was wearing a garter belt and the tiniest pair of panties that I've ever seen. "Do you like what you see, Edward?"

"Holy shit, yes. I do. Bella, there are no words," I sputtered.

She gave me a wicked grin and reached for my hand. We walked to the bed and she sat me on the edge. She tossed the flogger onto the bed and ran her fingers through my hair. "Lay back on the bed, Edward. Hands above your head."

I lie down and put my hands above my head. Bella took the tie that was around her neck and attached my hands to the headboard of the bed. She straddled my waist and leaned down. Her lips were a few centimeters away from mine. I could smell her. I could feel her. I wanted to kiss her, but didn't. She ran her fingertips down my cheeks, lightly caressing my lips. She pulled on my bottom lip and placed her finger into my mouth. "Suck, Edward." I pulled the finger into my mouth, sucking on her soft skin. "That's enough." Bella pulled the

## La Cantante

finger from my mouth and slipped it in her panties. She lightly fingered herself and her eyes rolled back in her head.

*Fuck. Me.*

She removed her hand and put her finger back by my lips. "Again, Edward." I greedily took her finger into my mouth and I could taste her. She was so turned on. Her finger was dripping with her juices. I wanted to lap it all up. I wanted to make her scream. However, she was running the show. "What do you want, Edward?"

"I want you," I growled.

"You need to be more specific, Edward," she said.

"I want your pussy," I begged.

"Do you want me to ride you, Edward?" Bella purred. She leaned forward and licked my lips.

"No, I want to taste you," I replied, straining to get closer. "Please."

She pursed her lips and thought. "Have you been a good boy?"

"God, yes, baby! I need to taste you," I begged.

She leaned forward and reached for my tie. She released my bindings and looked deeply into my eyes. "You've been amazing, Edward. I'm your prize."

I rotated my hips and flipped us so I was hovering over her. She squealed and her hair was spread over the pillows. She was breathing heavily and she reached for my face. I gave her a smirk and grasped her hands. I pushed them over her head and mirrored her action with my tie. She smiled and happily left her hands above her head, attached to the headboard. I reached for her panties and slid them down her long legs. She looked fucking amazing. I spread her legs and smiled slowly at her pussy. She was completely bare. I looked at her

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eyes and she was begging me. Pleading with me. Though not saying a word. I leaned forward and licked along her core. She screamed and I smiled as I reached the promised land. With one of my hands, I spread her pink lips. I pulled her clit between my lips and she rotated her hips. With my other hand, I pushed her leg up, getting a different angle. I slipped a finger into her slick folds and growled against her skin. She moaned and moved her hips with the rhythm that I set with my tongue and fingers. I was determined to make her come so hard that she wouldn't know what hit her. I added a second finger and flipped my hand. I curled my fingers and she continued to ride my face and my hand. I looked at her and she was staring me as I lay between her legs. I pulled my tongue away from her and smirked, keeping my fingers inside of her tight pussy. "Does that feel good, Bella?"

She moaned and nodded. She bucked her hips, indicating that she wanted my tongue back on her body. I'd gladly oblige. I flicked her clit with my tongue and lightly nibbled. I added a third finger and I could feel her body begin to quake. I wanted her to come. I moved my hand faster. Her breathing was becoming ragged and her chest was heaving. Her breasts had started to come out of the corset and I was amazed at her beauty. "You're fucking amazing, Bella. Come for me," I commanded. "I need to see you come." Bella moved her hips faster and her arousal was spilling down my hand. I bit down on her clit and I curled my fingers inside her body. She arched her back and screamed. Like two weeks ago, she came hard and fast, squirting into my mouth. I happily drank up all she had to offer. I kept my face attached to her body as she slowly returned from her orgasm. She lowered her leg and I pulled away. I kissed up her body, licking any skin that was exposed. I pulled one of her nipples between my teeth and she yelped.

"Edward, I want to feel you. Please," she begged. She wiggled her hands and I removed the tie from her wrists. She pushed me on my back and hovered over my straining cock. Our eyes locked and she lowered her body onto mine. "Oh, my god," she breathed.

"Fuck," I said. "It's been too long, baby. You feel so good around me."

## La Cantante

She sat on my cock, not moving for a few moments. Her eyes never left mine as she started moving up and down on my dick. My hands moved to her hips and I lightly ran my fingers over her tattoo, still amazed that she did that for me. She rotated her hips as she moved up and down, never breaking my gaze. "I love you, Edward."

"I love you, more, Bella," I breathed. "I'm close, baby."

Bella nodded and leaned down and kissed me, plunging her tongue into my mouth. I cupped her chin and fervently returned her kiss. She leaned back and started moving her hips faster, swiveling against mine. I felt my body begin to tense. Bella's muscles clenched around me and she was breathing heavily. I felt my dick twitch and I was about to explode into her. She screamed and her walls clamped around my cock and I spilled into her. She swiveled her hips a bit longer before she collapsed against my chest. "Holy crap."

"Tell me about it," I laughed. "That was the best I've ever had, Bella."

She nodded and sat up, moving off my lap. My cock pulled out of her and I moaned at the loss. So did Bella. She hopped off the bed and removed her shoes. She also scampered to the bathroom. I assume to change. Bella came out a few minutes later, wearing a red nightie. She blew out the candles and she lay down next to me. "Sorry, handsome. I needed to get out of that corset. It was hurting me."

"Baby, that's fine. However, you will wear that again for me, right?" I asked, wagging my brows.

"Anything for you, Edward," she giggled. Bella yawned and put her head on my chest. "I love you. Did you have a good Valentine's Day?"

"The best Valentine's Day in my life," I answered honestly. "Thank you for making it the best. I love you, beautiful. Unfortunately we need to face reality tomorrow."

"Yeah, yeah. Good night, Edward," Bella mumbled sleepily.

## La Cantante

"Good night, Bella." Bella looked up at me and I leaned down to kiss her. She pressed a kiss to my chest, on my swan and she settled into sleep. I watched her sleep. She had her hand laced with mine, toying with my ring as she slept. I played with her hair until sleep finally consumed me and I couldn't have been happier than I was right now.

**A/N: I told you the cliffie would be resolved. I hope you liked the delicious little lemon!**

# Alice's Prediction

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*I can't believe that I'm over 300 reviews. I said, inwardly, that I would be happy if I got 100 and now we're over 300. Thank you so much for your love and support for this story. I am truly appreciative of all the comments and suggestions that I've received.*

## Chapter 69: Alice's Prediction

### BPOV

I fell asleep so quickly. It felt so good to be with Edward. To make him squirm. To make him come. To feel his strength, his love, his cock. It was fucking amazing. I had the best night's sleep that I'd had in nearly a year and a half after we made love.

However, the alarm went off too early the next morning. I stretched my body and I was sore. Very sore. I groaned and pulled the blankets over my head. I moved my hand to Edward's side of the bed. It was empty. And cold.

*What the fuck?*

I poked my head up and looked around the room, not really seeing much as I was blind as a bat.

"Edward?" I croaked. I strained to listen if the shower was running. It wasn't. "Edward?"

I eased myself out of bed and yelped. I hurt a lot. I moved slowly to the door of

## La Cantante

the bedroom and reached for the handle. The door flew open and Edward ran right into me, causing me to fall on my ass.

"Fuck," I said as I fell. "Owww!"

"Oh my god, Bella. I'm so sorry," Edward said as he knelt down next to me. "Are you okay?"

"No," I moaned. "I hurt everywhere. I think we overdid it. Or rather I overdid and I'm paying for it today."

Edward reached for me and gently picked me up, cradling me against his chest. "Oh, baby," he said, his brows furrowed. He held me against his chest and I nuzzled him, wrapping my arms around his neck. "I'm so sorry."

Edward walked me to the bed and held up one finger. He returned a few moments later with a bottle of water and some ibuprofen. I eagerly took the medication and fell back onto the pillows. "Do you want to say home?" Edward asked, concern marring his handsome features.

"No, I can't. I've missed too many classes as it is," I mumble. "Where were you this morning?"

"Working on something in the office," Edward replied, a blush creeping over his cheeks.

"Can I know what it is?" I press.

"Later, beautiful. Do you want to shower?" Edward asked. I nodded and he darted off to the bathroom. He turned on the shower and returned to pick me up.

"Edward, I can walk, you know," I teased.

"I know, but I love holding you, beautiful," he smirked. "You fit perfectly in my arms."



## La Cantante

"Thank goodness you're a big macho man who can pick up my lard ass," I joked.

"Bella," he warned. "You weigh next to nothing."

"I'm kidding, Edward. Sheesh," I giggle. "I need underwear and clothes. They are in the closet. Can I get them or am I forced to go class naked."

"I love seeing you naked, but alas, you have to get dressed," Edward sighed. "Hop in."

I eased the nightie I wore to bed last night over my shoulders. My ribs, legs and abs were very sore. Edward slipped off his shorts and led me into the shower. He put his arms around me and we stood under the hot spray of the shower. It felt good on my tight muscles. I laid my head against Edward's chest and wrapped my arms around his narrow waist. "You had a good Valentine's Day, right, baby?"

He hummed against my hair, "I did, Bella. It was the best Valentine's Day I'd ever had. Turn around, beautiful."

I looked up at him and he indicated with his hand to turn. I did and he put his hands on my shoulders and began massaging them. His fingers moved smoothly over my skin and he eased some of the knots out of my back. I moaned and relished the impromptu massage. Edward chuckled and continued rubbing. He reached over my shoulder and put some body wash into his hands. He ran his slick hands over my body, still working the tight muscles. After he rinsed my body, he put some shampoo into his hands and worked the shampoo through my long hair. He pressed kisses along my shoulders and collarbones as he washed my hair.

All too quickly, Edward finished washing and rinsing my hair and began working on his own body. I wanted to help, but he gently swatted my hands away. I pouted and got out of the shower. I wrapped a towel around my body and brushed my hair. I took out the blow dryer and attacked my head. When my hair was mostly dry, I put it into a messy bun, brushed my teeth and put on

## La Cantante

some light make up. I decided to wear my glasses today as I didn't want to deal with my contacts. Edward had gotten out of the shower and was brushing his teeth. He put some cologne on, but didn't shave. I bumped him with my shoulder and gave him a smile. He smacked my ass and walked out to the bedroom.

We both got dressed and drove to campus. We had a pop quiz in Aural Harmony. Victoria was administering it. We were to go into a small practice room with her and sight read a short piece of music for her. We were given a number as we walked in and were called in by our number. I went in first. I did very well, as was expected. Victoria gave me my score, which was nearly perfect. She took off points for some minor rhythmic issues, she said. Bullshit. I nailed the rhythm. It was easy. I shrugged it off and waited for Edward. I took out my sociology book and read a few pages until I saw him walk out of the practice room. His face was contorted into a grimace.

"Edward? What's wrong?" I asked.

"Victoria. That's what's wrong. She made me feel very uncomfortable during my test and I completely flubbed it," he fumed.

"What did she do?"

"She played the tonic note of the key and then stepped up right behind me. I felt her rub against my back. I asked politely for her to step back, but she kept pressing against me," Edward grumbled. "I'm talking to Larry about this."

"Let's see if he's in his office," I suggest. "That is highly inappropriate. She may be a good assistant but she has no right to 'hit on' a student. It's unethical and wrong."

Edward and I walked down to Larry's office. His door was open. Edward hesitantly knocked on it and Larry called out. I nodded to the door and Edward walked through. I followed.

## La Cantante

"Morning, guys," Larry said with a friendly smile. "I was just working on your theory assignments. Excellent work. If you don't want to be music educators, both of you could make really good money being composers."

"Thanks, Larry," Edward replied. "Um, there's something I need to discuss with you. It's about your assistant."

"Victoria? What's wrong?" Larry asked as he got up from behind his desk.

"We had a sight reading test today and as you know, Victoria administered it," Edward began nervously. "Well, during the test, she made me feel very uncomfortable. She stood behind me and was rubbing against my back with her body."

"Did you ask her to stop?" Larry questioned.

"Of course. I asked her to back away but she moved closer. It even seemed like she put her head on my shoulder," Edward shuddered.

"That's highly inappropriate behavior for a teaching assistant of her caliber. I will discuss it with her. Do you want to meet with Dean Volturi?" Larry asked.

"No, sir. However, if you could ask her to keep her distance, that would be beneficial," Edward answered.

"I'll do that. I'm sorry, Edward about her behavior. If it continues, there will be more severe consequences. I swear I can't get a good assistant anymore," Larry said sadly. "First there's James and now Victoria? Goodness!"

"Thank you, Larry. We'll see you tomorrow," Edward said with a tight smile. "I'm sorry about being a pest."

"Nonsense, Edward. I'll talk to her. See you both tomorrow," Larry replied. He ushered us out and we walked to The Cage. Rose met up with us and we ate breakfast together.

## La Cantante

"So, how was Valentine's Day for you, Rose?" I asked as I nibbled on my breakfast sandwich.

"It was good. Emmett and I went out to eat and then spent some quality time in my room," she giggled, her cheeks turning pink. "Your brother is amazing in bed, Bella."

I choked on my sandwich and my eyes bugged out. I started coughing and I took a huge swig of water. "Rosalie Lillian Hale!"

"What? He is," she answered.

"But he's my *BROTHER*!" I screech.

"You talk to Alice about Edward," Rose pressed.

"What?" Edward squeaked.

"Nothing in detail, baby. Besides, the evil sprite pushes me to talk to her. I've tried to keep quiet but she's insistent," I answered.

"Remind me to attack Alice's clothes with a scissors," Edward muttered indignantly. "Evil little pixie."

"We know this, Edward. She is definitely evil," I giggle.

"How was your Valentine's Day?" Rose asked, waggling her brows.

"It was perfect," Edward mentioned with a warm smile.

"Did you like your present, Edward?" Rose asked with a wicked grin.

"Oh, good lord. You knew?" Edward laughed nervously.

"I was there when she bought it," Rose giggled. "Did you burst out of your pants?"

## La Cantante

"Fuck. My. Life," Edward said as he buried his head in his hands. Rose and I burst into laughter and I gently rubbed his back. He groaned and rubbed his hands over his face. His entire face was bright pink. He quickly sobered up and looked into Rose's steel grey eyes. "It was the hottest thing I'd ever experienced in my life. I was tied to the bed begging for more. Bella gave me the most intense orgasm and she did make me bust out of my pants."

Rose stopped giggling and stared at Edward, blinking away a few tears. "Seriously?"

He leaned forward slightly, "Seriously."

"Fuck me, Swan! You are a sex goddess!" she bellowed, smacking me on my back. Now it was my turn to turn a bright shade of pink. I glared at Edward and he calmly sipped his coffee. He gave me a playful smirk and I smacked him upside the head.

"Hey! You weren't complaining last night, either," Edward said, rubbing his head. "I'm counting at least three?"

"Three? Damn, Cullen! You are a sex god," Rose squealed. "You are one lucky bitch, Bella."

"I know. I am," I said as winked at Edward.

xx LC xx

The rest of the week went by quickly. Larry had spoken to Victoria about her behavior with Edward and she flat out denied it. She said that Edward was coming on to her, propositioning her for sex. She said if the behavior continued, she'd contact Dean Volturi and get Edward thrown out of Emerson. When Larry told him that, his face turned red and a vein popped out of his forehead. Larry also said that would not happen. He would believe us over Victoria. If it happened, then it happened. Larry assured him that Victoria would leave him alone and that from now on, no unaccompanied sight reading tests in small practice rooms.

## La Cantante

After Emerson Express rehearsal, I packed my bags for my trip to Vermont with the girls. Esme was picking us up after University Singers. I was excited to get away from school for a little bit and spend some time with my sisters and my future mother-in-law. Edward was pouting as I was packing, begging me not to go. I ruffled his hair and gave him a kiss. I explained to him that absence makes the heart grow fonder. I also reminded him of the wild monkey sex we had on our way home from SeaTac over Christmas break. Edward's eyes lit up and his face broke into a huge grin. He pinned me to the bed and promised that we would have wild monkey sex soon. I giggled and answered him with a swivel of the hips and deep searing kiss.

I finished packing and we worked on our psychology project. We worked on the power point presentation, creating a slide for the explanation of the unit we were assessing and a slide for each assessment that we had created. So far the power point was four slides long. By the time it was done, we would have approximately ten slides. It was an interesting project and I couldn't wait to present with Edward. He was such a dynamic writer and his voice was so smooth. I'd have to focus on not jumping him during the presentation.

Edward and I made love that night, very slow and very sweet. He was concerned with the soreness that I felt in my body from Valentine's Day. I calmed his fears and concerns with each kiss I gave him. With each caress. Being with Edward was like a soothing balm to my soul. He had such gentle way about him that made me feel like I was the only woman in the world. In his eyes, I was the only woman in the world. Never in my life did I think I could find a love like that. I was so blessed to have him and I loved him more than anyone can imagine.

Friday morning was cold and dreary. It matched my mood. It definitely matched Edward's mood. He was a grump. He really didn't want me to go. I didn't want to go, but made a promise to Alice, Rose and Esme. I was almost tempted to say I was sick to get out of it, but I got a text from Alice saying if I did, she'd disown me.

*How did she know that?*

## La Cantante

I got dressed in a pair of comfy jeans and my Emerson hoodie. If I was going to spend many hours in a car, I'm going to be comfortable. Fashion be damned. Alice can stick it if she gives me shit about my attire. In theory, Victoria was still not getting a clue. She still looking at Edward lustfully. I gave Larry a pointed look. He caught my eye and nodded in Victoria's way. Larry took a furtive glance and noticed her expression and who she was looking at. His eyes widened imperceptibly and continued with his lecture. At the conclusion of his lecture, he barked at Victoria to meet him in his office. She jumped but immediately obeyed. I smiled triumphantly and gathered my things.

"What's with the smug smile, Swan?" Edward asked.

"I got 'Red' in trouble," I giggled.

"How so?"

"She was eyefucking you and I caught Larry's eye. I nodded in her direction and he saw her drooling over my hot fiancé," I answered. "You're fucking gorgeous but you're *mine*."

"Damn right, I'm yours, Bella," Edward growled lightly, putting his arm around my waist. "I love you, baby."

"I love you, too, handsome. Ready to break a few pencils with Hafenrichter?" I laughed.

"Not really. I get such a bad case of writer's cramp in that class. He crams so much information into each lecture, it's insane," Edward said as he shook his hand. "I have to care for my hands. They are my livelihood. If they get injured, or worse, I'm screwed."

"That didn't stop you from punching 'Beefcake' at Eclipse on my birthday," I countered.

"He was threatening my woman. He had his hands on you and you didn't want them there. I defended your honor, baby. I'd do it again, in a heartbeat,"

Edward explained.

He arched a brow and gave me his own 'teacher stare.' I snorted, " We need to work on the 'bitch brow,' Edward. It doesn't look believable with you."

"What do you mean?" he griped.

I arched my own brow and gave him my evil teacher stare and he visibly shrank back. "Are you frightened of me, Edward?"

"When you look at me like that, yes," he laughed nervously. "How do you do it?"

"It's all in the eyes," I explained. "You're just too nice."

"You're *nice*, too. But you can pull that off. Damn woman," Edward said, awestruck.

"You have to be more of a dick if you want your 'teacher stare' to work. The murderous looks you gave James would do just nicely, if you tone them down," I offer.

"I'll work on it this weekend, Bella. Thanks for the tips," Edward replied, squeezing my hip, circling over my tattoo that's underneath my clothes. We settle into our seats and take out our notebooks. Hafenrichter blows in like a hurricane and begins his lecture with no warning. We all furiously begin writing and continue to do so for about an hour. Edward gave me a parting kiss before he jogged to his education class. I walked to biology and made sure I had my report for Dr. Haddon. I completed it on Wednesday evening while the boys were at Breaking Midnight rehearsal. I was not singing with them as I was going to be in a different state. I walked into the lecture hall and gave my report to Dr. Haddon and took my seat next to Alice. She had a look of concern on her elfin face.

On a corner of my notebook, I jotted down a quick note.



## La Cantante

*What's up, Ali?*

She took my notebook and scribbled something down. Her face still turned down in a frown.

*I have a bad feeling about this weekend. Something's going to happen. I'm not sure what, but it will.*

My brow furrowed and I swiped my notebook back.

*Do you know who it will affect?*

She looked at me and her eyes were sad. "Edward," she whispered.

My heart started hammering in my chest. Nothing can happen to him. He's my life, my soul, my everything. I furiously shook my head no. I darted up and ran to the bathroom, my phone in my hand. I went into one of the stalls and sat down on the toilet. Alice followed me into the bathroom.

"Bella? He won't get hurt," she said quietly.

"Alice, I need a minute. Go back to class," I mumbled.

"Are you sure, Bella?"

"Yeah. I'll be back in a few," I said, trying to sound as normal as possible.

"Okay," she replied. Alice exited the bathroom and I closed my eyes. I tried to picture myself in Edward's arms, leaning against his chest. I managed to calm myself to send a quick text to Edward.

*Alice says that something is going to happen to you. - B*

*She's probably overreacting. Ignore her. I do - E*

*I'm worried, Edward - B*

## La Cantante

*Baby, I'll be fine. The guys are spending the weekend at the apartment and all we have is our gig at Eclipse tonight - E*

*Call me as soon as your done with the gig, please - B*

*Of course, beautiful. I'll be fine. Love you - E*

*Love you more - B*

*Go back to class. Alice is getting worried - E*

*How? Why? - B*

*She just texted me. Love you and I'll see you in a half hour - E*

*Love you, handsome - B*

I got up and walked out of the stall. I went to wash my face and took a few more deep breaths. I walked back to the lecture hall and took my seat next to Alice. She gave me a hug and a concerned smile. I returned it weakly. I picked my pen and focused my attention to Dr. Haddon who was talking about dominant and recessive traits. I copied down the notes, but didn't really understand them. When Dr. Haddon dismissed us, I put on my jacket, my face an impassive mask.

"Bella, he's going to be alright. I'm sorry if I freaked you out," Alice said as we walked to Brandon.

"I know. I'm just tired of all the bull shit. Can't we just be happy? What did Edward and I ever do to deserve all this fucking drama?" I complained.

"You guys did absolutely nothing. It's the people who are fucked in the head who keep doing this to you," Alice reasoned. "I promise you, nothing will harm Edward."

## La Cantante

"If there is one hair on his head that is injured, Mary Alice, I will bleach all of your clothes," I threatened.

"I got it. I will gladly accept my punishment," Alice conceded.

When we walked into the choir room, I ran into Edward's arms and clung to him. He gently held me and pressed my cheek to his chest, against his heart. He always knows what I need. After a few moments, I pulled myself away and grabbed my choir folder. I sat down next to my love and laid my head against his shoulder. He intertwined his fingers with mine and kissed my forehead. We rehearsed in University Singers, but I didn't really participate. I moved my mouth and looked like I was singing. However, that wasn't the case. Eleazar dismissed us and told us to have a good weekend. Alice and Rose headed to Rathburn and Edward walked us to the car.

"What's going on, beautiful? Why are you so upset?" Edward asked as he drove us back to our apartment.

"She thinks something is going to happen to you. She doesn't know what, but she does know that you won't be hurt," I explained. "Now, I really don't want to go."

"Bella, you need this weekend with the girls. I'll be fine. We'll talk on the phone, text and it will be okay. If Alice says I'm not going to get hurt, then I'm not going to get hurt."

"What if Victoria tries something?" I asked.

"Then I'll cross that bridge when it happens. If it happens. However, you need to know that I love only you and I'm going to miss you tremendously," Edward said as he pulled the car up to the curb.

"Me, too, Edward. I love you so much. I'm sorry about my mini-breakdown," I apologized.

## La Cantante

"No big deal, baby. Let's finish getting you packed so you can have some fun with the girls," Edward said dryly.

"Try not to sound too enthused there, buddy," I deadpanned.

"I'm not. You're going to be gone and our bed is going to be so lonely, love," Edward said with his puppy dog pout.

"I have to share a bed with you *sister*. I'll get to sleep with a Cullen, but it's not the one I want," I mumbled. "She may try to make out with me again."

"Oh, good lord," Edward laughed. "She's a poor substitute for me, huh?"

"Um, yeah. You're 6'2" and she's 4'11". You're a big macho man and she's a midget little pixie. There's a HUGE difference, Edward," I giggled.

Edward unlocked our apartment door and ushered us inside. He closed the door and pinned me against it with his arms. "What time is my mom coming to pick you up?" he asked huskily.

"Two," I answered.

Edward looked at his watch and picked me up, wrapping my legs around his waist. "Just enough time for a quickie." He strode to the living room, kissing my neck and pulling my jacket off my shoulders. My fingers fisted into his soft hair and I moaned. He sat down and pulled me flush to his body. I reached for his coat and fumbled with the buttons. He threw the coat off his body and thrust his tongue into my mouth. I reached for the hem of my hoodie and I pulled away from him to take it off. It joined his jacket on the floor. I was wearing a thermal white shirt under my hoodie and Edward moved his hands under my shirt to gently palm my breasts. "You are so perfect, baby," he murmured against my lips.

"So are you, Edward," I whispered against his neck, sucking on the skin there.

## La Cantante

I reached for the buckle of his jeans and undid it quickly. Edward reached for the button of my jeans and stood up, moving my jeans down my legs, along with my panties. I eased his jeans down his own legs and gently pushed him back onto the couch. I straddled his legs and moaned. His fingers moved to the apex of my thighs and he circled my clit with his thumb. "You're so wet, baby."

"Only for you, Edward," I replied, swiveling my hips. I moved away and turned around. I sat down on his lap, aligning myself over his cock. He grasped it and eased into my entrance. "Oh, God," I moaned as began rocking my hips. Edward's hands moved to breasts and he gently flicked my nipples over my shirt.

"You're so tight, Bella. Feels amazing," Edward breathed against my neck. He nibbled on my earlobe and one of his hands snaked down my body. It found my clit and he began circling it with his fingers. I rotated my hips in the same rhythm as Edward's fingers. I turned my head and reached my hand back to pull his face to mine. "Fuck, I'm close," Edward moaned into my mouth. I reached down and covered his hand that was working my clit and we moved our fingers together. "That's so hot, baby."

I smiled against his mouth and moved faster, clenching my muscles around his cock. Edward's hips bucked and he was breathing erratically. We were both close to our release. I felt a slow burn creep into my belly and I moved one of my hands to my breasts, working it with Edward's hand. "Oh, Edward...harder," I moaned. He complied and slammed into my body, reaching deep into my core. His forehead was covered in sweat. I pulled away and leaned forward. I rocked my hips and the fire in belly ignited and I clamped down around Edward's perfect cock. I let out a guttural scream and Edward quickly followed. I got off Edward's lap and pouted at the emptiness I felt when his cock left me. I turned around and straddled his legs. His head was resting on the back of the couch and he was breathing heavily. "I'm going to miss you, baby," I said as I laid my head on his chest. His heart was stammering at a frantic pace. I pressed a kiss onto his chest and smiled.

"You have no idea how much I'm going to miss you, Bella. You definitely gave something to fantasize about while you're gone, though," Edward said as he

## La Cantante

raised his head. His eyes were still hooded and filled with passion.

I looked at the clock and it was a quarter to two. I frowned and picked up my jeans and panties. I slid them on my body and pulled my hoodie back over my head. Edward was still sitting on the couch, his jeans and boxers around his ankles. "Edward, you may want to get dressed. I love seeing you naked, or well, half naked, but Alice, Rose and Esme might not."

"Esme's seen it. She changed my diaper," Edward said as he remained seated.

"Edward, you are little bigger than when you were a baby," I giggled. "Get dressed, Cullen."

"Ugh, fine," he grumbled. He pulled up his jeans and tucked his now flaccid cock into his boxers. Edward walked into the bedroom and got my duffel bag and laptop bag from the office. He placed them near the door and grabbed my hand. We sat down on the couch and held me against his chest. He never said anything, he just held me and I was okay with that. We stayed that way until the intercom buzzed. Neither of us moved. It buzzed again and I forcefully extricated myself from Edward's embrace.

"Hello?" I asked.

"Bella? It's Esme."

"Hold on, let me buzz you in," I said with a smile. I held down the button and left the front door open. Edward got up and stood by the door. He wrapped his arms around my waist and put his chin on my shoulder. I laced my fingers with his and leaned against him. "I'll be back on Sunday, handsome. We've been apart longer."

"I know, love. Doesn't mean I have to like it," he said as he kissed my neck. Esme walked in and gave me a smile. "Hi Mom."

"Hello, Edward. Try not to sound too excited there," Esme teased.

## La Cantante

"You're taking my fiancée away from me and I'm sad," he pouted.

"Such a big baby," Esme snickered. "Bella is going to be in good hands, Edward. She can't spend every waking hour with you."

"I know," he countered.

"Hello, Bella," Esme said as she tried to hug me. Edward would not release his hold. "Edward, let go of Bella. I'd like to hug my future daughter-in-law."

He reluctantly released me and I walked into Esme's motherly embrace. She kissed my cheek and gave me a sweet smile. "Edward, my sweet boy, can you bring Bella's bags to the car?"

"Sure, Mom," he said as he put his jacket on. Edward slung my duffel over his shoulder and picked up my computer bag. He sauntered out of the apartment down to Esme's Land Rover.

"Are you excited about this weekend, Bella?" Esme asked.

"I am. It'll be nice to get away for a bit," I said with a smile. "This has not been the easiest year."

"That's definitely true. While we're there, we're going to do some major wedding planning. We also need to set up a weekend to get your wedding dress. Are you available next weekend?" Esme asked.

"I think so," I answered. "I'm not sure how I'm going to pay for my wedding dress, since my mom is not very supportive of our wedding."

"Don't worry about it, Bella," Esme said with a dismissive wave of her hand. "It'll be taken care of."

"Esme," I said. "That's too much."

## La Cantante

"No, it's not. I insist. Consider it a wedding present," she said, with a tone of finality. Edward returned and he gave his mom a tight smile. "Is everything in the car, my sweet boy?"

"Yep. You're all good," Edward mumbled.

"I'm going to head downstairs and call Alice and Rose. It'll give you two a chance to say good bye," Esme said with a sweet smile. "I love you, Edward. Don't get into too much trouble."

"Funny, Mom," he quipped. Esme kissed Edward on the cheek and he gave her a hug. "Drive safe, okay? You have some very precious cargo," he said as he squeezed my hip.

"I'm the safest driver out all of you," she teased. "See you in a little bit, Bella."

Esme slipped out of the apartment and Edward crushed me to his chest. I wrapped my arms around his waist and held tightly. "I love you, Edward. I'll be back in two days."

"I know, baby. Doesn't mean I'm going to miss you any less," he said against my hair. He gently cupped my chin and I looked up into his gorgeous green eyes. I reached up and took his glasses off so I could see them unobstructed. I put them onto the table in our hallway and caressed his soft lips. His eyes fluttered shut and he let out a deep breath. "I love you, Bella. So much." He opened his eyes and leaned down, brushing his lips with mine. His tongue traced my lips and asked for entrance. I opened my mouth and moved my own tongue against his. This kiss was so soft and so loving. It had a different tenor than any other kisses we'd had. It was perfect, like Edward. His fingers traced along my face, memorizing each curve. I did the same to his. All too soon, he pulled away. His eyes were filled with sadness, but they were also filled with love. "Come back to me, baby."

"I will, Edward. I love you. I'll call you when we get to the villa," I whispered. He nodded and led me out of the apartment after I got my messenger bag, purse and jacket. We walked, hand in hand, to Esme's car. Edward gave me another



## La Cantante

searing kiss before I clambered into the car. I rolled down the window. "I love you, baby. Have a good show tonight."

"I will. Call me," he said with a crooked smile. "I love you."

I gave him a wave as Esme pulled away from the curb. "Does it ever get any easier? Saying goodbye?"

"No, sweetheart. Especially when you love someone like you and Edward love each other," Esme said with a sad grin.

I watched in the mirror as Edward's form got smaller and smaller. We turned the corner and a tear fell down my cheek. I hastily wiped it away and steeled myself for the weekend ahead. It was going to be fun, but being away from Edward was not going to be easy.

*60 hours until you see him again. Not that you're counting or anything...Damn, Swan. You're pathetic.*

**A/N: So? Thumbs up or thumbs down? Up next will be the guys performing at Eclipse without Bella and the 'drama' that Alice predicted. Leave some love.**

# Confrontations and Pleasant Dreams

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 70 (Can you believe it?): Confrontations and Pleasant Dreams

### EPOV

Saying goodbye sucks. I mean, really, really sucks. I hate being away from Bella. Whenever we're separated, something goes wrong. Alice had a 'feeling' that something was going to happen this weekend and it was going to happen to me. I just hope that a speaker falls on my toe and that's it. Knowing Alice's ominous prediction, that is probably not it. The damn pixie and her 'feelings.' I just needed to get through this weekend and be with my Bella. Only sixty hours until I see her again. I can do this. I know I can do this. I'll be occupied. Tonight we have our gig at Eclipse, sans Bella. Then, the guys are spending the weekend at my apartment for male bonding. Whatever that means. Probably watching a lot of sports and eating pizza and beer.

*Oh, goody. I'd rather go to the symphony with Bella.*

I heaved a sigh and went back into the apartment. I took a shower because I didn't shower this morning. I felt a bit nasty. I styled my hair and put on my Breaking Midnight costume of black jeans and my Breaking Midnight t-shirt. After I changed, I went into the freezer and took out a frozen dinner. I stuck it into the microwave and cooked it. I nibbled on my dinner and put the tray into the garbage. I walked to the trash chute and tossed the garbage down it. As I was walking back to the empty apartment, *sigh*, my phone rang in my pocket.

"Hello?" I greeted, sounding absolutely pitiful.

## La Cantante

"What up, douche?" Emmett barked.

"Hello to you, too, Emmett," I snapped. "What's up?"

"The hick and I are heading to the storage locker to get our equipment. Do you want to join us for dinner?" Emmett asked.

"I just ate, but I'll come out with you because it's better than sitting in an empty apartment," I muttered dejectedly.

"Dude, you got to snap out of it. I miss Rosie and Jasper misses Alice, but we're not pissing and moaning about it," Emmett teased.

"I know. It's just every time we're apart, something *bad* happens," I reasoned.

"Nothing *bad* is going to happen. Jacob is deader than a doornail," Emmett pressed. "Trust me. Please, Cullen!"

"Fine, Em. Where do you want to go for dinner?" I asked.

"McFinnigans. I need me some grease," Emmett bellowed.

"I'll meet you there. About six?" I ask.

"Works for me. You'll be fine, Edward. Quit being such a pansy ass," Emmett griped.

"Whatever, Emmett. I'll see you at McFinnigans." I end the call and roll my eyes. I pinch my nose between my fingers and walk into the apartment. Once in there, I head to the office. I'm working on a song for Bella. I've had this idea rolling around in my head for awhile. I finally began to put it to paper after Valentine's Day. I was about halfway through it and I wanted to finish it before our wedding. By finishing it, I wanted to complete writing it and record it at the studio in Brandon.

## La Cantante

I worked on Bella's song for a couple of hours before I decide to head off to the restaurant. I was getting ready to go to McFinnigans and I was searching frantically for my glasses case. I needed to wear them to the restaurant and the club since I was driving. I still refused to wear them on stage as I had an 'image' to uphold. I'm not a vain guy, but it's not cool when a singer in a rock band has to wear glasses. I finally found the case and slip it in my jacket pocket. I got my guitar and my messenger bag and walked down to the car. I drove to McFinnigans and saw Emmett and Jasper sitting in the bar. I amble over to their table and ease on to one of the chairs.

"Hey guys," I smile.

"Drink up, Cullen," Emmett retorts, passing me a beer. "You need to drink your sorrows away."

I roll my eyes and take a sip of the beer that was handed to me. "Have you heard from Alice or Rose?"

"Nope. Probably won't hear from them until they get to Rose's place," Jasper drawled. "The girls are spending the entire weekend planning your wedding."

"Sounds like a great time," I said, dryly.

"We got it lucky, man. All we have to do is show up, on time, in a tux," Jasper laughed. "Women have to get all gussied up and shit. It's gnarly."

"However, we like it when they get gussied up," I said, raising my glass.

"Amen to that, brother," Emmett boomed. "I've been meaning to ask you. Have you heard anything from that music rep that your old choir director works with?"

"Not recently. I got the email from Garrett the day that Bella was in her car accident. I briefly mentioned it to him when I saw him on Monday, but we both were not really all there. If something happens, great. If not, we'll just keep doing what we do," I stated.

## La Cantante

"I was thinking," Jasper said with a contemplative look on his face.

"Stop the presses," I tease.

"Shut it, douche," Jasper snorted. "Anyhoo...I was thinking that we should get some merchandise. We've made some decent money from working at Eclipse and we can make some more t-shirts and hoodies. What do you think?"

"I think we should do some research of local silk-screen companies and get some quotes," I replied. "Good idea, Jas."

"I have a few brain cells that work, ass," Jasper barked, rolling his eyes. "I can do some research this weekend. How much money do we have in the account that you and Bella set up?"

"About \$4000. We should also think about recording a few CDs to sell as well," I suggested. "We can use the recording studio at Brandon to make the demo and burn them using my computer at home."

"I can create the jacket for the CDs. One of my assignments for computer graphic design is to create a CD cover for a 'make believe' band. I can create our jacket for my assignment," Emmett said excitedly.

"Excellent!" I smile. "Have you guys ordered?"

"Yeah, right before you got here. Do you want anything?" Jasper asked.

"I may get an appetizer. Nothing too heavy," I responded, looking for our server. I catch a server's eye and wave her down. She indicates to wait before she sways over to our table.

"Hiya. What can I get you?" she asked sweetly.

"Can I get an order of mozzarella sticks, please?" I asked politely.

"You got it. You want another beer?"

## La Cantante

"Nah, I'm good. Can I get water though?" I ask, not wanting to push my luck.

"Sure thing. I'll be right back with your orders." Our waitress scurries off.

"So, Edward, since the girls are talking wedding stuff, let's do the same," Emmett beamed.

"Oh, good lord," I blush. "What?"

"Why are you blushing, Cullen?"

"I'm not blushing," I lie. I could feel the heat in my cheeks. However, I didn't know why I was blushing.

"Suuuure," Emmett laughed. "Have you decided on where you're going for your honeymoon?"

"My family owns a small island off the coast of Brazil. We acquired it about 60 years ago. My grandparents purchased it. They built a small house there, but Esme has since renovated it," I replied. "I'm taking Bella there. We're going to spend two weeks at this island. It's called Isle Esme."

"Who named it?" Jasper asked.

"Jasper? Really?" I laugh. "It wasn't named until Carlisle inherited it from his father. He essentially gifted it to Esme when they got married."

"Oh," Jasper whispered. Then it dawned on him. "OH...now I get it."

I shook my head in disbelief of my friend. Love Jasper. Really, I do. But he's not the brightest bulb.

Our waitress returns with our food. Emmett and Jasper both ordered hamburgers and I received my mozzarella sticks. We tuck into our food and the conversation comes to a screeching halt. As I was finishing my last stick, my phone chirped from my pocket. I pulled it out and saw a text from Bella.

## La Cantante

*My ass is asleep. Too many hours in the car - B*

*Poor baby. Do you need me to massage it? - E*

*Yes please ;) - B*

*How much longer until you get to Rose's place? - E*

*About another hour or so - B*

*Sounds like a great time. Has Alice talked the entire time? - E*

*Fuck my life, yes! Is she always like this? - B*

*Yes. Especially in the car. She feels it necessary to fill the silence with incessant chatter - E*

*I'm thinking I'm going to slip her an ativan on the car ride back to Emerson - B*

*LOL Smart woman - E*

*Gotta go. Alice is threatening to take my phone away. Evil little sprite - B*

*Love you, baby. Miss you a ton - E*

*Love you more, Edward. Break a leg tonight - B*

*I'll try not to - E*

*Dork - B*

*Your dork - E*

*Love you - B*

*Love you too - E*

## La Cantante

I smile and put my phone back into my pocket. Our waitress returned with the check and we quickly pay our bill. We then head over to Eclipse to set up for our show. Kellan greets us with a small crew of workers to move our equipment onto the stage. We are set up in less than a half hour and we are ushered into the green room.

We all do our pre-show rituals and wait for Kellan to announce us. We say a quick prayer and listen intently. We hear Kellan announce our band and we quickly move onto the stage. We begin our set with "The Pretender" by the Foo Fighters. The crowd erupts in cheers and we feed off of their energy. My 'funk' quickly dissipates and I focus on making this the best show I can. I close my eyes and imagine that Bella is standing next to me. I can almost feel her presence and I smile and perform the best that I can.

We're about halfway through our set when we slow things down a bit. I pick up my acoustic guitar and begin playing "Never Think." I really don't care for Robert Pattinson, but this song is good.

*I should never think  
What's in your heart  
What's in our home  
So I won't*

*You'll learn to hate me  
But still call me baby  
Oh love  
So call me by my name*

*And save your soul  
Save your soul  
Before your too far gone  
Before nothing can be done*

As I'm singing, I look around the crowd. I can't see much, as things are pretty blurry. However, I see a shock of red hair and I am fearful that it's Victoria. I shake it off and continue singing.



## La Cantante

*I'll try to decide when  
She'll lie in the end  
I ain't got no fight in me  
In this whole damn world  
Tell you to hold off  
You choose to hold on  
It's the one thing that I've known*

*Once I put my coat on  
I coming out in this all wrong  
She standing outside holding me  
Saying oh please  
I'm in love  
I'm in love*

*Girl save your soul  
Go on save your soul  
Before it's too far gone  
And before nothing can be done*

*Cause without me  
You got it all  
So hold on  
Without me you got it all  
So hold on  
Without me you got it all  
Without me you got it all  
So hold on  
Without me you got it all  
Without me you got it all  
So hold on*

I finish the song and we move on to our next piece, "When I'm Gone." The rest of our set goes by uneventfully. I kept looking out into the audience for the red hair, but do not see it. I'm praying that it is just my imagination running away with me and that she's not here. After our final piece, "Sweet Child of Mine," I

## La Cantante

thank the audience and the lights fade out. We scramble off the stage and head into the green room. Emmett is enthusiastic at our performance. So is Jasper. I felt it went okay, but would have gone better if Bella had been with us. The magic wasn't there and it bothered me a bit. A few moments passed and Kellan burst through the door.

"Once again, fantastic job, guys!" he gushed. "Here's your check from last week."

I reach for the envelope and give him a tight smile. "Thanks, Kellan."

"Are you available sometime this week? We would like to have you perform twice coming up," Kellan said enthusiastically.

"Probably not this week. It's midterms and we all have studying and papers due," Jasper said. "The week after next should be a bit better."

Emmett and I nod. Kellan notes it in his Blackberry. "Can you perform on Friday next week, then?"

"Should be fine. We'll call you if it doesn't work out," I said diplomatically.

"Alright. Works for me. The VIP area is available for you if you want. You can pick up your equipment tomorrow," Kellan said with a grin. "See you next week."

"Thanks, Kellan," Emmett boomed. "I'm going to go up to the VIP lounge and grab a beer. Let's live it up while the girls are gone."

"I'm game," Jasper responded.

"One drink," I conceded. I slipped my glasses onto my face and grab my wallet. We head out into the crowd and are greeted with a mass of humanity who want our autographs and pictures. It was a bit disconcerting. We slowly moved to the VIP lounge and sat down in the couches. Emmett got up and went to get us drinks, as Jasper and I were still underage. Jasper was playing on his

## La Cantante

cell phone. The dreamy look in his indicated he was talking to Alice. I felt my phone buzz in my pocket and I saw a quick text from my love. She said that she got to the villa and was going to bed. I responded with a quick 'I love you' and slipped my phone back into my pocket. Emmett returned with our beers and we drank to a good set. I was about halfway through my beer and I decided to head to the bathroom. I moved through the crowd, battling hands on my shoulders and people begging for my picture. I gave them a polite smile but kept moving. I went into the bathroom and took care of business. I was washing my hands when I heard the door open up. I looked up in the mirror and saw red hair.

"Hello, Edward," came a sweet, baby voice. "You have a beautiful voice and such dynamic stage presence."

"Victoria, you do realize that this is the men's bathroom, right?" I responded, trying use humor to diffuse the situation.

"I know it's the men's bathroom," she said. Victoria locked the door and sauntered up to me. Her red hair was wild and her blue eyes were filled with lust. "I want to make you feel good, Edward. You're such an attractive man. You must have women falling at your feet."

"Victoria, this is highly inappropriate," I sputtered. I backed away from the counter and tried to get to the door. She blocked it by wrapping her arms around my neck.

"Edward, I know you want me," she cooed. "I can see it in your eyes. You want to fuck me."

"Victoria, no," I said, pushing her arms away. "I'm not in any way attracted to you. I'm engaged to be married and I love my fiancée very much."

"That little mouse?" Victoria seethed. "She's not worthy of you. You deserve a woman. Not a girl."

## La Cantante

"She's plenty woman for me," I fumed. I side stepped her and attempted to get to the door. "I'd like to go."

"Not until you feel what a real woman is like," Victoria snarled as she pushed me against the wall of the bathroom. She pressed her lips against mine and thrust her tongue between my lips. I fought the overwhelming feeling of throwing up as I gently pushed her back from me. She refused to move away, grabbing my hair and pulling. I turned my head and managed to get out of her grasp. She is breathless and her eyes are hooded. "I never would have pegged you to like it rough"

"You're delusional, Victoria," I sneer. Victoria reels back and smacks me across my face. She screams and begins tugging at her hair.

"You'll pay for this, Mr. Cullen," she growls. "You assaulted me and you will be thrown out of Emerson."

"No, I won't," I replied calmly.

"Who do you think Dean Volturi will believe? You, a big man or me, an innocent woman?"

"Me. Because I have proof," I smile evilly. I pointed over her shoulder to a small security camera that was in the bathroom. "You came on to me. And it's all on tape. You hit me. And it's all on tape."

Victoria screamed and ran out of the bathroom. I walked back to the sink and took a few deep breaths. After a few moments, I ran into one of the stalls and heaved up my dinner. Victoria's actions were reprehensible and unwarranted. It made me sick. I splashed some water on my face and swished some in my mouth. I quickly leave the bathroom and find Jasper and Emmett. I told them that I wasn't feeling good and I needed to head home. Of course, they gave me shit, but I needed to get out of there. As soon as I get into my apartment and run to my bedroom and lay down on Bella's side of the bed. I let her scent wash over me as I lay on her pillows and it calms me. Without changing, I fall into a deep, troubled sleep, incredibly pissed at what happened and fearful of what

## La Cantante

Victoria could do with her threats.

*Mental note: Call Kellan about the security tapes tomorrow.*

xx LC xx

I woke up the next morning to the phone ringing. I groggily moved from the bed and walked to where it was charging.

"Hello?"

"Morning, Edward," Bella chirped happily.

"Morning, Bella," I replied. "How Vermont?"

"It's beautiful. We're staying at Rose's villa and it's huge. It makes your home look like a shack. No offense."

"None taken, baby," I laughed.

"Did I wake you, Edward? I'm sorry," she gushed.

"Yeah, you woke me, but I'd rather talk with you. Sleep is overrated," I retorted. "What are you doing now?"

"We're at a local spa and I'm waiting to get a massage with Hilda," Bella said excitedly. "She's a former athletic trainer and is aware of my injuries. She promises I'll be like jello when she's done with me. How was the show?"

*It's now or never, Cullen. You need to tell her what Victoria did. Fuck. My. Life.*

"The show itself went really well. I felt that there was no magic because you weren't there, but the crowd was excited and enjoyed it. However, there was some drama afterward," I began.

## La Cantante

"Let me guess. Victoria? Was she there?" Bella said curtly.

"Um, yeah. She cornered me in the men's bathroom and threw herself at me," I said nervously, nibbling on my thumbnail.

"Stupid bitch. I'm so getting her fired, too," Bella fumed.

"Don't worry about it. I'm going to call Kellan and get the security tapes from the club. I'm going to Dean Volturi and informing him about the situation. I'm actually going to call Kellan after we get off the phone and ask to pick up the tapes," I explained.

"I'll let you go, then. Hilda is beckoning. This discussion is not over, Edward," Bella snapped.

"I know, baby. Are you mad?"

"Not at you. I know you would never do that to me. Because if you did, Rose, Emmett and I would feed you your balls dipped in caramel," Bella responded.

"Not something I would look forward to," I grimaced. "I love you, Bella."

"I love you, too, Edward. Call Kellan," she demanded. "I'll call you later."

"Bye, love," I answered as I ended the call. I took a few cleansing breaths and dialed Kellan. I realize that it was early but I needed to contact him. Sleep be damned.

"It's 9:30 in the morning, Edward. What do you want?" Kellan barked into the phone. "I didn't get home until after three."

"Hello to you, too, Kellan. I'm sorry to bother you so early, but I wouldn't have it wasn't important," I said.

"Now you've got my attention. What's up?" Kellan asked, slightly more awake.

## La Cantante

"Last night, a woman came into the men's bathroom and started to, well, um...?"

"Some chick tried to jump you?" Kellan offered.

"Sounds about right. The thing is that she's my TA for one of my classes here at Emerson. She's threatening to get me expelled and is going to go to the Dean for my 'behavior,'" I snort. "It's bullshit. She is also saying that I came on to her and she's the innocent."

"That's crap. What do you need?" Kellan asked.

"I need a copy of the security tapes because I'm going to the Dean first with proof that she was coming on to me. Not the other way around," I stated.

"Can you be at the club by 11? We recycle the tapes every week and we start new tapes on Saturday."

"With bells on."

"Awesome. Meet me at the back door at 11 and we'll burn you a copy of the tape from the men's bathroom. Later, Edward," Kellan said.

"Thanks, Kellan. See you in a bit," I smiled. I hopped out of bed and ran to the shower. I never changed out of my clothes last night and I felt totally nasty. I quickly went through my shower routine and throw my clothes into the hamper. I grab a pair of jeans and a hoodie and threw them onto my still damp body. I picked up the hamper and put a load of laundry into the washer before I ate some breakfast. I left the apartment after a half hour and drove over to Eclipse. As he said, a very tired Kellan was standing by the back door. He was in a pair of workout pants and he had a pair of thick glasses on his nose. I hopped out of the car and walked up to him, giving him my signature smile.

"Ain't going to dazzle me today, Cullen," he grumbled. "Let's go. I need to sleep some more."

## La Cantante

"Thank you again, Kellan. I really appreciate this," I said. Kellan simply nodded and unlocked the back door. He punched in the security code and we walked into the club. He led me up some stairs to the security room and he plopped down on one of the cushy chairs that were in there. He swiped his hands over the keyboards and the screens popped to life.

"Around what time did this chick come into the bathroom?" Kellan asked, looking over his shoulder.

"About 10:30."

On one of the screens, he pulls up the time stamp of 10:30 and you saw me walk into the bathroom. Thankfully the urinals were out of the view of the camera. I watched as the 'video me' went to wash my hands and Victoria snuck into the bathroom and started her seduction. As we watched, it was clear as day that I was the 'victim' in this whole thing. Not her. Kellan made me a copy of what happened and handed it to me. "I'm sorry, man. She looks like she's all types of crazy. I know that you're incredibly happy with Bella. What's her name?"

"Victoria," I answered simply. "I can't remember her last name right now, but she's a bit hard to miss."

"Yeah. I remember her. Bright red hair, right?"

"Yep. Thank you for this," I replied, holding the DVD.

"I take care of my own. You're a good kid, Edward. You've been through enough. Anything to make things a little easier is my goal," Kellan said quietly. "I'll add her picture and name into the 'no admittance list.'"

"Thanks. I'm going to see if the Dean is in his office today and get this settled, permanently," I said as grabbed my keys from my coat pocket.

"Good luck, Edward. See you next week."



## La Cantante

"Bye, Kellan," I said as I darted out of the room. I slid into my Volvo and looked up Dean Volturi's number. I found it and called it as I pulled away from Eclipse.

"Dean Aro Volturi," he barked into the phone.

"Dean Volturi? My name is Edward Cullen and I'm a student at Emerson University. I was wondering if you have time to meet with me. I want to file a complaint against a teaching assistant at the university."

"Of course, Edward. I'm in my office doing some paperwork. Stop by anytime today," Dean Volturi replied.

"I'm on my way now. I'll be there in a little bit, sir."

"Just come right in when you get here. The door will be open." Dean Volturi ended the call and I increased my speed back to Emerson. I made it there in record time. I parked my car and darted into the building that housed Dean Volturi's office. Not wanting to wait for the elevator, I ran up the stairs and walked to the disciplinary offices. Gianna, Aro's secretary was sitting there, signing some papers.

"Can I help you?" she asked kindly.

"I'm here to see Dean Volturi. I'm Edward Cullen," I replied, slightly out of breath.

"He said to go right in," Gianna smiled.

I nodded and opened Dean Volturi's door. I walked into the large room and toward the desk near the windows. "Dean Volturi?"

"I think the last time we met, I asked you to call me Aro," he said with a smile. "How are you doing, Mr. Cullen?"

## La Cantante

"I could be better, Aro. I want to file a complaint against Victoria St. Peters. She's the teaching assistant Dr. Laurent Meyers. She's been making overt sexual comments and touching me inappropriately. Last night, she kissed me and threatened to come to your office and get me expelled."

"Oh dear," Aro said quietly. "Do you have proof of this alleged kiss?"

"Yes sir," I replied, removing the DVD from my jacket pocket.

Aro picked it up and walked to a small television in his office. He sat down and put the DVD into the player and turned it on. He watched the interaction between Victoria and I a few times before he frowned. "This is unacceptable. Is this the first time she approached you like this?"

"It was the first time where she kissed me. However, earlier this week, she administered a test for Aural Harmony and she put her arms around my waist and laid her head on my back. I asked her to stop, but she refused. I've spoken with Dr. Meyers about this and he mentioned it to her. She flat out denied it saying I came on to her, propositioning her for sex. That is not the case. I'm engaged to be married. I'm not interested in the slightest," I spat.

"Well, first off, congratulations on your engagement," Aro said, trying to calm me down. I took a deep breath and gave him a tight smile. "Secondly, I'll need to do some investigating. For now, she'll be removed from your class as TA and be placed under administrative leave. If she tries anything else, please contact me as soon as possible. I'm terribly sorry about this ordeal, Mr. Cullen."

"It's not your fault, Aro. However, I appreciate your apology. When you do talk to her, she will say that I came onto her. As you can see from the video I gave you that is not the case."

"Yes. She was quite forceful with you. You handled it like a gentleman. Anyhow, I'll be in touch," Aro said kindly. He held out his hand and I shook it. We both walked to his door and he ushered me out. "This will be resolved, Mr. Cullen. Good luck."

## La Cantante

"Thank you, Aro. I appreciate your help with this," I said. He nodded and I stepped out of his office. I waved at Gianna and waited for the elevator. As I was waiting, I sent a text to Bella.

*I met with Aro about what happened last night. He needs to investigate, but hopefully she's gone - E*

*Good. Enough drama. We need to have good times, damn it! - B*

*You're telling me. How was the massage? - E*

*Fabulous. Hilda is the bomb! Getting ready for a mud bath - B*

*Um, isn't that counterintuitive? - E*

*It's supposed to make your skin really soft. But yes it is. LOL - B*

*Well, enjoy your mud bath. Call me later, baby? - E*

*Of course handsome. Love you! - B*

*Love you more - E*

I drove back to the apartment and waited for the call from Emmett and Jasper. We were heading over to Eclipse after three to pick up our equipment. I decided to do some work on my final project for education. I had purchased a couple of books to use as resources and did some reading. I then created some worksheets based off the articles that I read. By the time Emmett and Jasper gave me a call, I had the basic outline for my Jazz and Blues unit and some introductory activities for the 'imaginary' students.

We drove over to Eclipse and loaded our equipment into our respective vehicles. Now that I had a larger car, I was able to take some equipment as well. I fit the sound system and speakers into the back of the car. Emmett placed his drum set and speaker stands into his truck. We drove to the storage facility and loaded it up. Before we left, I paid the attendant for the next six

## La Cantante

months out of the checking account that we created for Breaking Midnight. We drove back to my apartment and ordered some pizza. There was a UFC fight on and the guys wanted to watch it on my flat screen. They all chipped in some money and I ordered it through Pay Per View. The fight was about to start when my phone started vibrating in my pocket. I stood up and picked up a few empty beer bottles and walked to the kitchen.

"Hello, beautiful," I answered.

"How are you doing, handsome?" Bella giggled.

"Better now that I'm talking to you," I said.

"Oh GAG ME!" Emmett boomed from the living room.

"Smack him upside the head," Bella laughed.

"Your wish is my command, baby," I snorted. I walked back to the living room and smacked Emmett. He flipped me the bird and I stuck my tongue out. "I'm going to go into the bedroom to finish this call, you douche."

"Don't have phone sex with my sister," Emmett teased.

"Too late for that," I answered. I heard Bella laughing over the phone and Emmett scowled at me. I rolled my eyes and walked to the bedroom, closing the door. "Your brother is an idiot, Bella."

"You're just NOW figuring this out, Edward. For someone who is 'Mensa' material, you're a little slow," she teased.

"Shut it, Swan," I warned. "I miss you."

"I miss you, too, baby," she said sadly. "Only twelve more hours until I see you. Aren't we pathetic?"

"Yes, but I'm okay with that," I laughed. "How was the rest of your day?"

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"It was good. My skin is silky smooth, thanks to my counterintuitive mud bath. I got a manicure and pedicure. We finished it all off with getting stuff waxed. I just got my brows done, nothing else. Since, well, you know," Bella mumbled.

"Are you blushing, my beautiful Bella?" I teased as I laid back on the pillows.

"Yes," she squeaked.

"You don't need to, you know. I love you what you do for me," I replied huskily. "It turns me on."

"It hurts while I'm getting it done, but feels so good when we make love or when you go down on me," she cooed.

"Baby, we probably should stop. I'm getting hard over here..." I sighed.

"I'm getting wet," she purred.

"Fuck. Me."

"When I get home, handsome. As soon as I walk through the door, be prepared for me to jump you," she giggled.

"I'll start doing to strength and endurance training. We are not leaving the apartment on Monday except for our dance rehearsal with Felix. The rest of the time will be spent naked," I said seriously.

"Works for me. I hate to cut this short, but Alice is throwing things at me. We are heading to some fancy restaurant in town. I wanted to hear your incredibly sexy voice before I left. I really miss you, baby."

"I miss you more, my love. Less than twelve hours. Enjoy your fancy dinner while I eat nasty pizza and smell Jasper and Emmett's flatulence over here," I grumbled.

"I'm so sorry, Edward. Have fun. Love you."

## La Cantante

"Love you too. Bye baby," I replied quietly. Bella hung up the phone and I ended the call on my end. Shortly after our call ended my phone buzzed. I received a new text from Bella. She snapped a picture of herself, making a kissy face toward me. I threw my head back and laughed and did the same for her. I walked back out to the living room to find the flatulence twins sprawled out on my couch, coffee table covered in pizza crusts and beer bottles.

*I so do NOT miss this.*

I rolled my eyes and picked up the food and beer bottles, tossing them into the garbage. After cleaning up from the two human pig sties, I grabbed my own beer and settled down to watch the fight. I really wasn't into it, but it was better than wallowing in my own self pity that I missed Bella. The fights ended a little after one in the morning. I insisted that Jasper and Emmett both stay as they were both pretty lit. Emmett actually conked out on the couch and I helped Jasper to the office. He was pretty incoherent as he called me Alice and tried to kiss me. I managed to dance away from his puckering lips and went into my bedroom. I washed my face and stripped out of my clothes. I closed my eyes and fell into a deep sleep.

xx LC xx

*I am standing in our meadow, wearing a black tuxedo and white vest. Emmett and Jasper are standing behind me. The sun is shining and the meadow is filled with fragrant flowers. I look out to my family and I smile. Today is the day that I join myself with the love of my life. Of my existence. The string quartet begins to play 'Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring,' and each bridesmaid walks down the aisle toward our altar.*

*Angela comes first, wearing a beautiful purple dress, carrying a small bouquet of purple and white flowers. She glances at Ben and gives him a shy smile. Next comes Rosalie. She looks radiant in the same dress as Angela. Her hair is curled and looks like a halo around her face. She smiles joyously as she walks down the aisle. Alice is last before my love. Alice dances down the aisle, looking more like a fairy than a bridesmaid. She smiles at me and gives me a wink.*

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*The string quartet seamlessly morphs to 'Canon in D' by Pachelbel. Our friends and family stand up and block my view. After a few moments, I see her. Bella is on the arm of her father, wearing a beautiful white gown and long veil. She moves gracefully toward me, tears streaming down her face. I can only assume they are tears of joy and not of sadness. I have the same tears coming down my face. My love. My life. My singer.*

*Charlie stops her before the altar and gives her a watery smile. Bella reluctantly pulls her eyes away from mine and looks at her dad. He gently kisses her cheek before he places her hand into mine. When our hands touch, a strong energy flows between our fingers, causing both of us to gasp. I squeeze her hand, relishing her touch. I hear a faint whisper.*

*"I love you, my Edward. My singer. My son, you deserve all this happiness. I'm always with you. I love you both," Elizabeth whispers. Bella and I look up and we see my mother. We are the only ones who see her. She is wearing a white dress and she looks healthy. Her green eyes are sparkling and she touches both of our cheeks. "Lei è l'amore di l'un l'altro, l'anima gemella di l'un l'altro. Lei entrambi sono i cantanti di l'un l'altro. Essere felice e celebrare il suo amore."*

*My mother gives me a warm, lopsided smile and kisses my forehead. She does the same to Bella and with a gust of wind she is gone. Bella and I look at each other, our love affirmed and we turn to face Pastor Webber.*

My eyes flutter open and I smile at the beautiful dream I just had. In her own way, my mother has given her approval of my Bella. I sit up and I can feel the dampness on my cheeks. I sneak into the office where Jasper was sleeping and I grab my laptop. I type the dream to the best of my ability because I don't want to forget such a wonderful memory. Even if it is in my dreams, I will cherish it always.

I lay back down and I whisper, "Thank you, Mom. I'm so glad that you approve of my Bella." I feel a slight breeze and my hair is brushed off my forehead. "I love you, too, Mom." My eyes close and I smile as I fall back asleep.

**A/N: Breaking Midnight's Set List:**

**The Pretender - Foo Fighters**

**Drive - Incubus**

**Send the Pain Below - Chevelle**

**Can't Change Me - Chris Cornell**

**Summer of '69 - Bryan Adams**

**Dream On - Aerosmith**

**Under the Bridge - Red Hot Chili Peppersf**

**Lithium - Nirvana**

**Never Think - Robert Pattinson**

**When I'm Gone - Three Doors Down**

**Don't Stop Believing - Journey**

**You Gave Love a Bad Name - Bon Jovi**

**I write Sins, Not Tragedies - Panic at the Disco**

**Smells Like Teen Spirit - Nirvana**

**This Ain't a Scene - Fall Out Boy**

**Sweet Child of Mine - Guns and Roses**

*Translation:*

*Lei è l'amore di l'un l'altro, l'anima gemella di l'un l'altro. Lei entrambi sono i cantanti di l'un l'altro. Essere felice e celebrare il suo amore - You are*



## La Cantante

*each other's love, each other's soul mate. You both are each other's singer.  
Be happy and celebrate your love.*

# Disciplinary Hearing

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 71: Disciplinary Action

### BPOV

Damn Alice and her feelings. She said that something was going to happen this weekend and it never fails. Something did. That crazy bitch, Victoria, put the moves on *my fiancé*! Thank goodness Edward had the presences of mind to realize it. However, Alice did say that Edward would not be harmed physically and it appeared that he was fine. Still doesn't piss me off that Victoria put her hands on my Edward. Stupid cow.

On a lighter note, we did manage to get a great deal planned for our wedding. We finalized the menu that I wanted, chose the invitations, got a rough idea of what we wanted for flowers and made plans to go to Kleinfelds next weekend on Saturday to try on dresses. After we decided on my dress, then we'd pick out the bridesmaid dresses. It was a very productive weekend and as much as I hated to be away from Edward, a lot of fun with the girls.

Rose's, Barbie (yes her name was Barbie), mom was a hoot. When we met her, she appeared to be a very stuffy woman, but she had such a dry sense of humor and very tenacious. She was exactly like Rose, only more polished. I immediately loved her. She was very welcoming and gushed over my engagement ring. She also felt for me when I told her about my ordeal with Jacob. It was amazing that this stranger had more compassion over my plight than my own mother.

The villa we stayed in was huge. I was not lying to Edward when I told him

## La Cantante

that the villa made his parents' home look like a shack. It was easily twice the size of Edward's home and immaculately decorated. We each had our own suite. The suites had a sitting room, bedroom, bathroom and huge walk in closets. I was in awe of the home. My entire house in Forks could fit the suite I stayed in. It was amazing and scary.

After brunch on Sunday morning, Barbie gave us each a huge hug. She extended an open invitation to all of us to come to the villa anytime we wanted. She was so gracious and kind. I felt my eyes tear up and my heart pang for the love I felt from someone I just met. Barbie pulled me aside and called me out on my melancholy look on my face.

"What's wrong, Bella? You seem sad," Barbie frowned, or rather attempted to frown. She definitely had a love of Botox.

"I'm just so grateful for your kindness. I've felt more compassion from you and Esme than I've felt from my own mother," I said.

"Esme mentioned that to me when we were getting our facials yesterday," Barbie said. "It is abhorrent how your mother behaved. When Rosalie was attacked, I dropped everything to be with my baby girl. I didn't judge her for the situation she was put in. She needed my love and support. I gave it to her willingly. Has your mom tried to call you since your accident?"

"Nope. If she expects a wedding invitation, she better get her ass in gear," I snapped. "Sorry about cursing."

"Don't worry about it, Bella. I agree with you, sweetheart. It may take some strength on your part, but extend an olive branch. She may be embarrassed over her behavior. However, if you ever need anything or if you want to talk, don't hesitate to call me. I know I'm not your mom, but I know how you must feel. I saw it in Rosalie," Barbie said as she gave me a hug. "Give me your phone."

I handed her my cell phone and she programmed her phone number into it. She gave me another hug and I darted off to my suite to finish packing. I lugged my

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bags down the stairs and loaded them into the Land Rover. Alice and Rose were hugging Barbie as I walked back into the villa. She gave me another hug and we all got into Esme's Land Rover. She plugged in her iPod and we jammed out to bad 80s and 90s music all the way back to Emerson.

About halfway back to campus, we pulled off and did a stretch break. Esme was getting tired and she handed the keys to me. Alice whined that she couldn't drive. We all emphatically cried no. Alice pouted; she knew she was a speed demon. I eased the Land Rover back onto the highway and drove the rest of the way. We stopped at a restaurant about an hour away from campus. We ate an early dinner. I ordered some food for Edward as I didn't want to cook when I got back from my road trip. I pulled up to Rathburn and helped Alice and Rose into their dorm room. The room they were in was a bit smaller than our dorm room in Patterson, but it was nice. When I got back out to the car, Esme was in the driver's seat. She drove me back to Dorwood Hills.

"I called Edward and he said he'd meet us downstairs," Esme said with a warm smile. "I'm glad you came with us, Bella. It was a lot of fun."

"Thank you, Esme. I appreciate your willingness to drive," I said as I grabbed her hand. "I'm looking forward to next weekend to try on wedding dresses."

"Me too, Bella," Esme said as she started bouncing in her seat. "So many beautiful dresses, so little time."

"Oh, goodness," I teased. "You're exactly like Alice with clothes."

"Where you do you think she gets it from? Certainly not Carlisle," Esme laughed. "There's my wonderful son, waiting for you as he promised. He's got the Alice bounce going on now. He looks like he's about to jump out of his skin." I look out the window and see Edward, wearing a pair of black jeans and a black long sleeved t-shirt. His face is radiantly handsome and I could almost feel his excitement.

"He does," I giggle. "Thank you again, Esme. I appreciate this!"

## La Cantante

"It was my pleasure, sweetheart," Esme said as she leaned across the console to give me a hug. I smiled as I got out of the Land Rover. Edward was already at the rear of the car getting my bags out of the back.

"Hi Mom," he said with a smile. "Thank you for bringing my fiancée back safe and sound."

"She did most of the driving back to campus, Edward," Esme chuckled.

"Whatever, she's home and that's all that matters," Edward said as he smiled at his mom. He leaned in and kissed her on the cheek. "Drive safely home. Call me when you get there."

"I will, my sweet boy. I love you," Esme said as she patted his scruffy cheek. "I love you, too, Bella. Enjoy your day off tomorrow."

"I love you, Esme. I will enjoy my day off," I said as Edward snaked his arm around me. "More than you will ever imagine." Edward blushed and looked down at me with a look of shock on his face. Esme gave a wink and pulled away from the curb.

Edward picked up my bags and we walked into the apartment building. As soon as we were in the elevator, Edward crushed his lips against mine and pulled me close to his body. "Fuck, you taste good, baby," he mumbled against my lips. "You're right about absences making the heart grow fonder." He tangled his fingers into my hair and thrust his tongue into my mouth. I eagerly accepted it and moaned.

"I thought I'd be doing the jumping, Edward," I breathed as he moved from my mouth. Edward looked at me and his eyes were filled with passion. I pulled his face back to mine and I held onto him tightly. The elevator opened and we broke apart, breathing heavily. Edward picked up my bags and sauntered out of the elevator, like nothing happened.

*Ass.*

## La Cantante

I took a few deep breaths and followed him out of the elevator to our apartment. I walked through the open door and shut it behind me. "Edward?"

I heard a cough behind me and Edward was leaning against the door frame of the entrance. I whimpered and my eyes widened. Edward stood up and his posture was so straight. His eyes were dark and filled with lust. "Take off your coat, Isabella."

*Oh, Domward wants to play. And I need new panties.*

I fumbled with the buttons of my coat and I ease it off my shoulders. Edward moved closer to me and I stay standing, keeping my eyes down. He takes my chin between his fingers and raises my face so I can look into his eyes. "So beautiful, Isabella." He gently runs his fingers across my lips and growls lightly. He removes his fingers from my face and takes my hand. He leads me to the bedroom. There are candles lit and it smells heavenly. Edward comes behind me and I hear a rustle. His hands come around my head and he ties his tie over my eyes. My hands move up to the tie and I gasp. He chuckles darkly and tugs on my ponytail, pulling my head back. His lips attach themselves to my neck, right above my pulse point. I moan and move my head to give him better access. His other hand moves around my belly and splays over my body. I feel myself being pulled flush to him. I can feel his excitement and I swivel my hips. Edward abruptly moves away and I whimper at the loss.

What seems like an eternity, I stand in the bedroom. Not moving. Waiting for Edward's next move. I listen intently for any indication to where Edward is in the room. I hear nothing. Eventually I hear a soft rustle and Edward's hands are back on my body. He reaches around me and begins unbuttoning my blouse.

*Boy am I glad I wore some nice lingerie today.*

Edward finishes unbuttoning my blouse, not touching my skin or pressing himself to me. I am confused. My brows furrow and I heard Edward chuckle. "All will be explained, Isabella. Trust me."

## La Cantante

I nod and unfurrow my brows. Edward ghosts his fingers down my arm and moves me to the bed. He reaches for my jeans and he unbuttons them, easing them down my legs. I step out of them after I toe off my shoes. Edward picked me up and I yelped at the surprise in movement. He laid me down onto the bed and I hear more rustling. I hear some soft clinking noises and I am confused. I feel the bed dip and Edward is straddling my legs. His fingers caress my body and he tugs on my hands. I sit up and I put my hands against Edward's chest. He removed his shirt and I feel the muscles contract under my touch. Edward reached behind me and unclasped my bra. He gently removed my bra from my body and gently pushed me back onto the pillows. I heard the faint clinking again and I feel something cold against my chest. I squeak and buck my hips. Edward chuckled and continues moving the cold item over my body.

"Edward..." I moan. I feel something trickling down my sides. It's ice. Edward moved the ice to my breasts and runs it over my nipples. I throw my head back and moan. "Oh, God."

"Do you like this, Isabella?" Edward purred.

"Yes," I breathe. "It feels amazing, Edward." With his other hand, he gently massaged my breast and I felt him lean forward. He ran his nose along my jaw, inhaling my scent. I feel a rumble in his chest and I am getting so turned on. "I'm so wet, Edward."

"I know, Isabella," he breathed against my skin. He slowly moved down my body, blowing on my breasts. My nipples automatically respond to the cold and I arch my back. Edward bit down on my nipple and I yelped. I feel his smile against my skin. His hands move to my boy shorts and he gave a gentle tug. I raise my hips and he pulled my panties down my legs. I heard more tinkling and Edward moved to lay between my legs. His lips attached themselves to my clit and they were cold.

"Fuck!" I cried. Edward licked along my slit, his tongue warming up against my hot folds. He pulled away and I whimpered. "Don't stop, Edward. Please."

Edward chuckled darkly and his lips came back to my heated core. They were cold again. He got some more ice. With his fingers, he ran them along my slick folds. His fingers were also cold. It felt so different. So good. He eased two fingers into me and I gasped. I nearly came right there. Edward continued licking my clit and pumping his hand in my body. With his other hand, he held some ice and I felt it drip along the apex of my thighs. I took a shuddered breath and my muscles began to contract. "Fuck me," Edward said with awe. He moved his face back between my legs and licked with fervor. "You are so hot, Isabella," he murmured against my core. He added another fingers and pulled his lips away. I heard sucking and quickly his mouth returned to my clit. His cold lips and tongue licked me and I felt my body unravel. My breaths were coming in erratic puffs and my muscles clamped down on his fingers. I let out a guttural scream, arching my back off the bed. Edward kept his mouth on my core, pumping furiously in my body. I slowly came back to him, running my fingers up and down my body.

Edward moved away from my sex and removed his fingers. He pressed sweet kisses up my body, licking on my tattoo. He finally arrived at my face and he removed my blindfold. Once he did, he leaned down and plunged his tongue into my mouth. I eagerly accepted it and I could taste my arousal on his lips and tongue. I could feel myself get wetter as I kissed him. I could feel his arousal nudge my entrance. In my orgasm-induced haze, I hadn't realized that Edward had removed the rest of his clothes. "Please, Edward," I begged.

He gently pushed some hair away from my face and gently kissed my lips. He eased himself into my body and I gasped at how he felt. He was so hard. So turned on. He pulled away and looked into my eyes intently. Our gaze held as he moved into me, filling me to the hilt. "I love you, Bella," he whispered.

I reached up and gently pushed some hair off his forehead, "I love you, so much, Edward." I reached my arms around his neck and he moved a bit faster, never breaking my loving stare. I tilted my pelvis up to get a different angle. He felt so good inside me. I never wanted him to leave my body. My eyes fluttered shut and I could feel a slow burn in my belly. Edward leaned down and brushed his lips against mine. I moved my lips in tandem with his. He reached for one of my legs and put it over his shoulder. His movements



## La Cantante

increased speed and increased in pressure. It felt so amazing. "Oh...God!" I cried against his mouth.

"Come for me again, Bella. I love it when you come," he growled. My eyes shot open and Edward's gaze will still locked into mine. My body began to quake and I grasped my hand behind his neck. My fingernails dug into his skin and he hissed. He swiveled his hips and he moved deeper into me. My breathing became heavier and my body clamped around his cock. I screamed as I exploded around his body. Edward pulled away and roared as he spilled into me. His muscles contracted and his eyes shut. After a few more thrusts, Edward collapsed on top of me and it felt so good. I felt so safe and so connected to him. I wrapped my arms around his neck and kissed the sensitive skin behind his earlobe.

Edward pulled away and rolled off me, pulling out of my body. We both moaned at our lost connection and I laid my head on his chest. His heart was still pounding, but it was slowing. "Wow," I whispered. "That was hot. And cold."

"Now you know how I felt when you did the beer thing to me," Edward replied as he ran his fingers through my hair. "You are the sexiest creature on the planet, Bella."

"When you were going down on me, you sounded like you were in awe. What was the deal, Edward?" I said.

"You might be embarrassed, but it is the hottest thing I've ever seen," he said. I looked at him, arching a brow. "When you were coming, especially the last few times, you've actually 'squirted.'"

"Holy shit," I said as I buried my face into my hands. "You're right, I am embarrassed."

"Bella, don't be. I am shocked that I'm able to do that to you," he said, his face in a triumphant grin. "I'm happy I can make you feel that good."

## La Cantante

I poked up and looked at him skeptically. He gently caressed my cheeks.

"Bella, don't be embarrassed. I love you and I love that I can do that to you. It feels good right?"

"Better than good, Edward," I retorted.

"Then, stop it, beautiful. Enjoy it because I intend to do it as often as you'll let me," he said as gave me a crooked grin. Edward brushed his lips against mine and then kissed my nose. I snuggled closer to him and wrapped my arms around his waist. He idly played with my hair as we lay on our bed, enjoying each other. Edward let out a huge sigh.

"What's wrong, Edward?" I asked.

"I want to tell you about what happened this weekend with Victoria. However, it's a conversation that should best happen while we're clothed. As much as I love having you naked and in my arms, I don't want to be distracted," Edward said with a worried look on his face. I frown and extricate myself from his warm embrace. I go into the closet and pull on a pair of panties and yoga pants, along with a t-shirt. Edward slid on a pair of workout pants and a hoodie. He picked up the glass with the ice and grabbed my hand. He led me to the living room and sat us down on the couch.

I wrinkled my nose as I sat down on the couch. "Did Emmett sleep here last night?"

"Yeah. He had a bit of a problem with gas. I've opened the windows and lit candles all day today and I cannot get the stench out of here. It's just gross," Edward said as he scrunched his own nose. "I don't know how I lived with him for a semester."

I held up a finger and went into the linen closet. I took out the Febreze and sprayed it all over the living room. I also picked up a flame thrower and lit the candles on the coffee table. Edward was chuckling as I moved around the room. I sat back down and inhaled. It was better. "So, tell me. What happened?"

Edward took a deep breath and told me about Victoria's brash behavior at Eclipse. He told me about how she cornered him in the men's restroom, kissing him without his permission. Edward then explained that she threatened to get him expelled from Emerson. Edward had the presence of mind to notice that there was a security camera in the bathroom. Why there was a security camera in the bathroom is beyond me, but it worked in our favor. Edward told me that he called Kellan early the next morning and got a copy of the video. He brought the video to Dean Volturi who was going to investigate the Edward's claims.

Kellan had slipped him another copy of the video when the guys picked up the equipment for his own records. I told Edward that I wanted to see it. Edward nodded and already had it set up in the DVD player. He turned on the video and it was grainy, but you could easily make out Edward as he walked in. A few moments later, Victoria sauntered in and locked the door. Edward's body language clearly indicated that he was not comfortable and didn't want to be in the same room as her. She latched her arms around Edward's neck, idly playing with his hair. Edward pushed her arms away and he tried to leave. Victoria slammed Edward against the wall and kissed him forcefully. Edward turned his head away and Victoria slapped him. I hissed at her attack on my fiancé. Edward reached his arm around my waist and rubbed soothing circles on my back. Before the video ended, I saw Edward indicate to the camera and it looked like Victoria screamed and ran out of the bathroom.

"What a crazy bitch," I seethed.

"You're telling me. She was insane in the bathroom," Edward mumbled. "Are you mad at me?"

"Hell no! You did nothing wrong, Edward. I trust you. Implicitly. It's her that I don't trust," I said passionately.

Edward took a deep breath and gave me a warm smile. "I was so afraid that you would have accused me of cheating and dump my sorry ass."

## La Cantante

"Edward, after all we've been through, this is a walk in the park," I said, indicating to the television. "I'll never want to be away from you. Ever. I hope you know that."

"I do. However, I was still panicking. Though I did get some reassurance last night as I was sleeping," Edward said with a wistful smile.

"What, handsome?" I asked.

"I had the best dream ever. It was our wedding day and after you walked toward me in this absolutely gorgeous wedding gown, on the arm of Charlie, I saw my mom. We both did. She said that she loved me and that we deserve all the happiness. She also said that she was always with me. She mumbled something in Italian and I recognized a few words. However, I think the gist of it was that we were each other's soul mate, each other's singer. She wanted us to be happy and celebrate our love. She kissed me and then she kissed you. In her own way, she approved of you, Bella. I'm so happy," Edward said as a few tears fell down his cheeks.

"Wow," I whisper. "I'm in shock. That is a wonderful dream. I really wish I could have met your mom. She seems like such a wonderful woman." I crawled into Edward's lap and wrapped my arms around his neck. I buried my face into the crook his neck and he held me close to him. We sit there for an immeasurable amount of time, happy in each other's arms.

Our reverie was broken by Edward's phone ringing in the bedroom. He gently lifted me off his lap and jogged to get his phone. I heard his faint conversation. Edward strolls back into the living room and he plopped down on the couch. "Okay, thanks Felix."

"What's up?"

"Felix needs to cancel for tomorrow. Demetri is really sick and is in the hospital. He's getting his appendix out. Felix is understandably quite upset and doesn't want to leave his side. So, tomorrow is going to be spent sans clothing," Edward said with a suggestive waggle of his brows.

## La Cantante

I arch my own brow and reach for the hem of his hoodie. "Who says it needs to start tomorrow?"

"Fuck me."

xx LC xx

As promised, our day off was spent without clothing. We made love, cuddled, made love some more, watched a movie, made love, took a bath and made love. It was the best day I'd had in my entire life. The only time that was spent with clothes on was when Edward went to the door to get our Chinese delivery. Even then, it was a pair of basketball shorts and he was naked underneath them. As soon as the door was closed, he stripped them off his body and he went back to being gloriously naked.

Even though we had slept in on Monday, we fell asleep early that evening. All of our exertions of making love tired us out. It was a little after nine when we fell asleep, in each other's arms. Like I said, it was the best day ever. Well, the day I got engaged was better, but this was pretty damn good.

We went to class on Tuesday, and Larry was in Aural Harmony alone. Edward had a small smug smile on his face as he knew why Victoria was noticeably absent. Larry appeared to be upset, but it was because of the lack of plans left by Victoria. Larry gave Edward a sympathetic look and I knew that Larry was aware of Victoria did. Edward gave a slight nod in acknowledgement. After Aural Harmony, Larry called Edward up to the front of the room. He gave him an envelope and clapped him on his shoulder. I walked up to Edward and he tore into the envelope. He quickly scanned it and his face turned up into a smile.

"There's going to be a disciplinary review of Victoria's behavior. If she is found guilty of sexual harassment, she will be summarily removed from the Emerson University staff and I can press criminal charges," Edward said. I reached for the letter and read the stuffy letter. I smiled and gave him a hug.

"The hearing is on Friday," Edward said. "You'll be there, right?"

## La Cantante

"Of course, Edward. We're in this together. I would never abandon you, baby," I said. He smiled and laced his fingers with mine. We walked to The Cage and got some breakfast. We both didn't eat a lot yesterday except the Chinese food. We both ordered a breakfast platter and devoured it.

Rose came into The Cage and sat down at our table. "Hey kids," she said with a smile. "Did you enjoy your day off?"

"Very much, Rose. How was yours?" Edward asked as he finished his breakfast.

"Lazy. Alice and I spent the entire day in our pajamas watching bad chick movies," Rose giggled. "What did you do?"

I blushed, as did Edward, "We did the same."

"Liar. You're both blushing. You did more than just watch movies. If I had to hazard a guess, you watched those movies naked and there was not a whole lot of watching going on," Rose guffawed.

"Is it wrong to spend the day worshipping each other?" Edward asked seriously.

"No, it's not wrong. You two are just insatiable. I mean seriously," Rose giggled.

Edward and I shrugged and laced our fingers together. "It's good to have a healthy sex life, Rosalie," Edward admonished. "I have no complaints. Do you, Bella?"

"Nope. You're the best I've ever had," I answered honestly.

"I'm the only one you've ever had, Bella," Edward joked, kissing my nose. "I'm glad that's the way it is, though."

"Insatiable and nauseating," Rose gagged. "What's this?"

## La Cantante

Rose pointed to the letter that was sitting on the table in front of Edward's plate. "It's a letter from Dean of Discipline, Dean Volturi. I had an issue over the weekend with Victoria, the TA from music theory and aural harmony, and I went to him with a charge of sexual harassment."

"What happened, Edward? What did she do?" Rose asked, concern covering her attractive features.

"At our performance on Friday, she cornered me in the men's room and sexually assaulted me. She kissed me without my permission and slapped me when I refused her. It was all caught on tape and I gave the tape to Dean Volturi on Saturday. I just got this letter from Larry after class today. The disciplinary review is happening on Friday. If she's found guilty, she'll be fired from the university and I can press criminal charges against her."

"Are you? Going to press charges?" Rose asked. Her face was full of worry and anxiety.

"I'm not sure," Edward said.

"You should. She violated you. Not in such a pervasive manner as a guy raping a girl, but she did violate your personal space and wishes. You should press charges," Rose stated vehemently. "No one should be able to do things like that anybody!"

"Okay, Rosalie," Edward said quietly. He put his hand on her arm and she jerked it away. Her steel eyes were filling with tears and she buried her head in her arms. Edward looked at me with panic in his eyes.

"Rose, it's okay. Edward's fine," I whispered, scratching her back.

"I know. Flashback," Rose muttered into her arms. "I'm sorry, Edward."

"It's okay, Rosalie. I understand," he said sympathetically.

## La Cantante

Rose looked up and she had a tenacious look in her eyes. She grabbed Edward's face. "Don't let her win, Edward. She's a predator and will continue doing this to young men until someone finally has the balls to stop her. Be that guy who stops her," she said fervently. Edward laid his hands over hers and nodded. She released his cheeks and wrapped her arms around his neck. Edward hesitantly put his arms around Rose's waist and gently hugged her. Rose pulled away and sat down in her chair.

For the rest of breakfast, Rose and I told Edward about the plans that we had figured out for the wedding. He seemed pretty interested, which surprised me. He even made some suggestions for flowers. I jotted them down. We headed back to Brandon and sat through an interesting lecture about the late Classical period. Eleazar played his examples and even asked Edward to come up and perform one of the pieces from our listening, Beethoven's *Pathetique Sonata*. He did so perfectly and without music.

The rest of the day went by uneventfully. On Wednesday, Edward went to his old high school for more observation hours. When he got there, Garrett was absent. His wife had gone into labor and Garrett forgot to inform Edward. Edward sent Garrett a text saying he would run rehearsal for him. The substitute that he got was not a music person and the students were going to lose a rehearsal day. Garrett thanked Edward and said he would count this as double hours.

While Edward was doing his hours, I decided to do what Barbie suggested and extend an olive branch to my mother. I couldn't do it alone, so I called Emmett. He came over and brought alcohol. He made me drink a shot before I called Renee. I dialed her number and waited for her to pick up.

"Hello?"

"Hey Phil," I said, breathing a sigh of relief. Phil got it. He was not happy with Renee's behavior when they came to visit.

"Hi, Bella. How are you doing?" he asked.



## La Cantante

"I'm much, much better," I said. "I'm over almost all of my physical injuries. I still get some headaches from my head injury, but the ribs are pretty much healed."

"That's fantastic, Bella," Phil said. I could hear him smile over the phone. "I bet you're looking for your mom."

"Uh, yeah. Is she there?" I asked, nibbling on my bottom lip.

"Hold on. I'll get her for you," Phil said. I heard him call for Renee and some muffled words of the phone. "Here's your mom, Bella. It was nice to talk to you. I love you, sweetie."

"I love you, too, Phil," I replied. I took a few deep breaths and waited for Renee to pick up.

"Hello, Isabella," Renee said coldly.

"Hi, Mom. How are you?" I asked.

"Fine," she responded tersely. "You?"

"I'm getting better. Thanks for asking," I said. I looked at Emmett, panic filling my eyes. "How was your Valentine's day?"

"Good. Phil took me to a nice restaurant and brought me flowers. What did you and Edward do?" Renee asked, still coldly.

"We exchanged gifts and he picked up dinner from our favorite restaurant. He got me a couple charms for my charm bracelet and I got him a Claddagh ring," I answered.

"Are you still engaged?" Renee snapped.

"Yes, Mom. We're still engaged and couldn't be happier," I whispered. I waited for an answer and all I got was nothing. "Mom?"

## La Cantante

"What, Isabella? Do you expect me to be happy about this? You're too young," Renee barked. "Edward seems like a lovely young man, but are you sure you want to *marry* him?"

"I've never been so sure about anything in my life, Mom. Why can't you recognize that?" I pleaded.

"Do you want the truth, Isabella?"

"Yes, Mom. I want you tell me why don't understand this," I begged.

"I'm jealous," she said quietly.

"Why are you jealous? You have Phil. You both love each other," I responded.

"I'm jealous that you found your love so early in your life. I loved your father, very much. At the time, I thought he was my 'happily ever after.' For the time being, he was. However, we changed. Drastically. Our love was strong, but not as strong as it should have been. That's why we got divorced. Charlie and I were two different people when we got married. You're so much like Charlie, it scares me. Emmett is more like me, Bella. Anyhow, the way that you and Edward react to each other is more like a couple who has been together much longer than you have been. It's like your souls were disconnected and you've finally found each other," Renee whispered. "I always wanted that. I kind of found it with Phil. We are not soul mates, but we are closer than your father and I. I am just fearful that you and Edward will change and you'll fall out of love as quickly as you fell into love."

"Mom, we feel something for each other. Every time we touch, it's like an electric current that runs through our skin. We are connected in a way that I never thought possible. I've never imagined anything like it. I've never felt anything like it. This current that flows through us sustains our relationship and we both feel it. I never want to go without it. This is more than just a crush or a passing relationship. This is a forever, 'happily ever after' love. I want you to be happy for me, Mom. Please," I cry fervently.

## La Cantante

"I am happy for you, Bella. I am just being stubborn. I'm sorry about being such a bitch while you were injured. I shouldn't have done that and I apologize. Please say you forgive me," Renee sniffled.

"I forgive you, Mom," I said quietly.

"So, have you made any more plans for your wedding?" Renee asked.

"Well, we decided on a date and a location. We're getting married on August 13th at Edward's parents' home here in New York. We also met with a pastor to perform our ceremony. Esme, Edward's adoptive mother, Alice, Rose and I discussed wedding invitations, flowers and menu items over the weekend. This coming weekend, we're going shopping for my wedding dress. Do you think you can come?" I asked.

"What day, Bella?" Renee asked.

"Saturday. We're going to Kleinfelds," I answered.

"Let me check with Phil. Money is a bit tight right now. If we can financially swing it, I'll be there. If not, make sure you take pictures," Renee said. "I'm sorry, baby girl. I really am. I hope you can forgive me."

"It's already forgotten. Just don't do it again," I warn.

"Got it, Bella. You were always such a grown up, even as a child. It doesn't surprise me that you are so certain about Edward. He seems wise beyond his years, as well. Apologize to him for me, okay?" Renee said contritely.

"I will. I'll talk to you later. I love you, Mom," I smile.

"I love you, too, Bella," Renee said and she hung up the phone.

I collapsed against the couch and scream into a pillow. "Your mother is infuriating, Emmett McCarty Swan."

## La Cantante

"I know, Isabelly. Believe me I know. I tried calling her to ask for Nana's ring," Emmett said quietly. He snapped his hands over his mouth. His brown eyes got as big as saucers.

"Nana's ring? Nana's engagement ring?" I squeak. "Are you planning on proposing to Rosalie?"

"Not right now, Bella. But I want to. She's wonderful and I want to be with her for the rest of my life. Well, suffice it to say, mom was not very forthcoming in my request. She hung up on me, mumbling about both her children falling off the deep end," Emmett snorted.

"Wow, Em. I thought you'd be a bachelor for the rest of your life," I teased.

"Shut it, Isabelly. I'm thinking about proposing to her before she leaves for Italy with you guys to University Singers," Emmett murmured. "I just need to get that damn ring."

"You've got a few months, Em. You can get it," I said as I elbowed him in the ribs. Emmett smiled his dimply smile and pulled me into a noogie. I squealed and fought to get out of his arms. Edward strolled in as I was attacking Emmett with a pillow. "Edward help me! Hold down his arms."

Edward laughed and moved to Emmett's other side. He sprinted to the door and laughed as he darted out the door. "Victory is mine!" he yelled through the door.

"What was that about?" Edward laughed.

"He gave me a noogie," I snorted. "Evil Emmett. How was your day?"

Edward flopped onto the couch and groaned. "I'm fucking exhausted. I ran rehearsals while the sub sat on her ass reading a magazine. I was pulling things out of thin air during rehearsals that I never thought I could do. I'm quite proud of myself, but I'm whipped. How about you?"

## La Cantante

"I called my mom," I said, pulling Edward's feet into my lap. I slipped off his shoes and began massaging his feet. He groaned and fell back into the couch cushions. I giggled and continued my story. "She apologized."

"No shit," Edward sighed.

"Yep. To both of us. You want to know why she was such a bitch?" I asked.

"Why?"

"She was jealous of our relationship," I answered.

"Um, okay," Edward skeptically. I shrug and move my fingers to his calf and massage that as well. I rub his feet for a few more minutes and make dinner. We eat in a comfortable silence and then do some homework. Edward ducked into the bedroom after he finished his theory homework. I do some work on my biology lab report and then go to sleep. Edward is snoring lightly as I get ready for bed. I crawl into bed and lay my head against his chest. Automatically, his arms enfold me to his chest. I kiss his heart and I fall asleep myself.

xx LC xx

On Thursday, we get an email from Felix saying that Express rehearsal is canceled. Demetri is still in the hospital and Felix didn't want to leave him. Edward and I used that time to work on our psychology project. We created one more assessment for the assignment. We also added it to the power point. Edward also received a phone call from Dean Volturi's office reminding him of his appearance for Victoria's disciplinary hearing.

We woke up early on Friday. Edward and I wanted to dress up for the hearing, not looking like slobs. Edward wore his black suit, white shirt and black and gray tie and I wore my black pant suit, with a green blouse underneath. Edward even attempted to tame his wild mane of hair. He was so adorable as he ran his fingers through his hair. I eventually sat him down on the tub and I worked the pomade through his hair and made it look pretty normal. He scowled at me and I kissed his nose.

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We went to classes not really paying attention to what was going on. Edward was fussing with his tie tack during theory. I reached for his hand and laced my fingers with his. My touch calmed him and he gave me a crooked grin. After University Singers, we went to Old Main for the hearing. Edward confidently walked up to the front desk and asked the student worker where the hearing was being held. She directed us to the fifth floor. We rode up the elevator and I could feel Edward's nerves.

"Edward, you did nothing wrong," I said quietly, slipping my hand into his.

"I know. I just hate confrontation," Edward muttered. "I'll be happy when this is done."

"Me, too, handsome."

Edward brought my hand up to his soft lips and he brushed them across my knuckles. He closed his eyes and took a few cleansing breaths before we walked out of the elevator. We followed the directions that the student worker gave us. We were led into a large room where Dean Volturi, President Volturi and another man were sitting. Gianna approached us and ushered to two seats. Edward took off his overcoat and held out his hand for mine. He took them and hung them in the back of the room. Larry walked in as Edward was hanging our coats. He walked with Edward to our seats. Larry gave me a smile and settled down in the uncomfortable wooden chairs.

Victoria flounced in a few moments later, wearing a seductive black dress. Her hair was pinned into a chic twist. She had a lawyer and he looked slimy. They sat down at the table in front of Dean Volturi, President Volturi and the other man. Victoria gave Edward a hateful glare and crossed her legs. Edward hissed and narrowed his eyes.

"Good afternoon, ladies and gentleman. My name is Dean Aro Volturi and I'm the Dean of Discipline here at Emerson University. In attendance to this disciplinary hearing, representing the university are President Marcus Volturi, Dr. Marius Gianetti, Dean of Academic Integrity and Dr. Laurent Meyers, Professor of Music. The charges are as follows. Student, Mr. Edward Cullen,

## La Cantante

charges teaching assistant, Victoria St. Peters, with sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and behavior unbecoming an employee of Emerson University. How do you plead, Ms. St. Peters?"

"Not guilty, Dean Volturi," Victoria sneered.

"Please note that the accused has pled not guilty to the charges brought against her. Mr. Cullen, can you please come to the stand?" Dean Volturi asked with a small smile.

Edward got up and buttoned his suit coat. He moved confidently to the stand that Dean Volturi indicated. He sat down and looked at the tribunal of very intimidating men.

"Mr. Cullen, can you please tell us what happened that led you to press charges against Ms. St. Peters?" Dean Volturi asked.

Edward explained about Victoria's stares, her stunt in the practice room, and finishing with the situation that happened at Eclipse. Victoria was getting more and more upset as Edward spoke. She was shooting daggers at my fiancé.

"Is there any proof that Ms. St. Peters did any of these things to you?" President Volturi asked.

Edward told President Volturi about the security tapes and how he brought it to Dean Volturi. Dean Volturi gestured to Gianna and she scurried out to get the television. She pressed play after she set up the television and the disciplinary board watched Victoria kiss and assault Edward.

"Do you have any questions for Mr. Cullen?" Dean Volturi asked Victoria's lawyer.

"A few," he sneered. "My name is Thomas Batner and I represent Ms. St. Peters. Mr. Cullen, do you find Ms. St. Peters to be attractive?"

"She's not my type, but she's pretty," Edward answered honestly.

"Did you tell her that?"

"Tell her what?" Edward snorted.

"That's she's pretty?" Mr. Batner scoffed.

"No. Ms. St. Peters was, for all intents and purposes, my teacher and that would have been inappropriate."

"Are you in a relationship now, Mr. Cullen?"

"Yes, I'm engaged to be married. My fiancée is sitting in the room," Edward replied.

"Aren't you a bit young be getting married?" Mr. Batner asked.

"No. What are you implying, Mr. Batner?" Edward snarled.

"Nothing. No further questions," Mr. Batner said quickly. He sat down and patted Victoria on the back.

Edward got up from the stand and walked back to his seat. I laced my fingers with his. His tense posture relaxed at my touch and he blew out a breath. I squeezed his hand and he gave me a tight smile.

"Up next to the stand is Dr. Laurent Meyers," Dean Volturi announced. Larry got up and walked to the stand and plopped down onto the chair. "Please state your name and your position here at Emerson."

"My name is Dr. Laurent Meyers and I'm a professor of music theory, aural harmony, beginning piano and percussion methods."

"How has Ms. St. Peters' done as a teaching assistant?"

"She's a great assistant. Very organized, detailed oriented and has a great mind," Larry answered.



## La Cantante

"Have you had any complaints about her teaching?" Dean Volturi asked.

"Not until Edward brought his concerns to my attention. She was not like my last assistant. She was very good with the students and explained the concepts very well," Larry said.

"Did you believe Mr. Cullen when he brought forth his accusations?" President Volturi asked.

"Yes. He's been a very forthcoming student. I've never doubted his integrity in any instance. He is one of the best and brightest in the music department," Larry answered honestly.

"Thank you, Dr. Meyers. Any questions Mr. Batner?" President Volturi asked.

"No sir."

"You may step down, Dr. Meyers," Dr. Gianetti said quietly. "Up next is Ms. St. Peters."

Victoria got up and sat down on the chair. She crossed her legs and looked at the disciplinary board with a seductive smirk.

"Please state your name and what you do here at Emerson," Dean Volturi said curtly.

"My name is Victoria St. Peters. I'm a teaching assistant for Dr. Laurent Meyers. I'm working on my doctorate in music therapy."

"Can you please tell us, in your words, what happened with Mr. Cullen?" Dean Volturi asked.

Victoria began this wild tale of how Edward led her on, promising her sex and money for a good grade in music theory and aural harmony. She said that she had had enough at Eclipse and that's why she slapped him. She said that Edward fucked her in a practice room. She also said that she might be

## La Cantante

pregnant. Edward squeezed my hand so tight, I thought my fingers were going to break.

"Do you have proof of these accusations?" President Volturi asked.

"No. I only have my word. Surely that must mean something," she simpered.

President Volturi nodded and gave her a small smile. He didn't believe her.

"Do you have anything else you want to add?" Dr. Gianetti asked.

"No, sir," she said seductively. She batted her eyes at Dr. Gianetti and he fought back a laugh.

"If there is nothing else, then this hearing is concluded," Dean Volturi. "We will discuss and will inform you of our decision. Please don't go far." The disciplinary board got up and exited the room.

Edward got up and left the room. I followed him. I looked around and found an empty room. "Edward! In here, come on let's talk," I hissed.

Edward moved into the vacant room that I found. I closed the door and he flipped a chair. I cowered at his anger, but he needed to get rid of the pent up anger. He slid down the wall and held his head in his hands. "She's fucking lying. That stupid bitch is lying!"

"I know, Edward. I'm certain that the disciplinary board knows that too," I replied as I sat in front of him.

"This is surreal. Absolutely surreal," Edward mumbled. "I can't believe the lies she told the board. Fuck!"

"Edward, you need to calm down, baby," I whispered. I reached for his hand and I laced my fingers through them. He relaxed and gave me a look of worry. "You are innocent. It was your accusation. Not hers."

## La Cantante

I heard a faint knock on the door. Larry poked his head in and said that the board was back. I helped Edward up and we walked back into the hearing room. Dean Volturi was standing in the middle of the room and he had a murderous look on his normally jovial face. "Now that we're all back. We've reached a decision. Ms. St. Peters, please stand."

Victoria stood up and she gave him a sensual grin.

"Ms. St. Peters, you are found guilty of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and behavior unbecoming an Emerson University employee. Your employment is hereby terminated. You are also banned from being a teaching assistant in any more New York State Universities. Mr. Cullen, do you wish to press criminal charges against Ms. St. Peters?"

"Yes, sir," Edward said with conviction.

"Excellent. Gianna?" Dean Volturi asked. She scurried out and Detective Lutz and two officers came into the hearing room. "She's all yours, Detective."

"Thank you, Dean Volturi. Victoria St. Peters, you are under arrest for the sexual harassment and assault of Edward Cullen. You have the right to remain silent..." Detective Lutz said as he led Victoria out of the hearing room.

"Mr. Cullen and Ms. Swan, on behalf of Emerson University, we apologize for the actions of Ms. St. Peters. As a form of compensation, your tuition for this semester will be refunded. Please accept this with our deepest apologies," President Volturi stated. He walked up to Edward and shook his hand. He turned to me and did the same. "Please stop by my office next week for your refund check."

"Thank you, sir," Edward said quietly. I nodded minutely, giving him a small smile. The disciplinary board gave us an apologetic nod and they exited the room. Larry put his hand on Edward's shoulder before he left. "Did that really just happen?"

## La Cantante

"Yes, it did. You won, Edward!" I squealed. Edward pulled me into a tight hug, holding me to his body. "No more drama!"

"No more drama. I couldn't have done this without you, Bella. I love you, so much!" he said as he covered my face with kisses.

"I love you, too. Let's get out of here," I said with a smile.

"Gladly. Let's go to Costa's before heading to Eclipse," Edward said with a radiant grin.

"Sounds good to me," I replied. We headed down the hall to the elevator. We both felt so light and it was amazing. Hopefully, there will be no more drama for us. We've had too much and now we needed our happiness. I could feel the happiness coming.

# Wedding Dresses

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 72: Wedding Dresses

### BPOV

Edward and I went back to the apartment and changed before going to Costa's Greek restaurant. As we were driving to the restaurant, Edward's phone rang.

"Hello?" Edward asked. "Hi, Detective Lutz."

I heard the disembodied voice of the detective and Edward was listening intently as we drove to Costas.

"So, I do need to come in to give my statement?" Edward asked. "Tomorrow? That's fine. I'll see you then. Thank you, detective."

"What did he say, Edward?" I asked.

"I need to go in tomorrow and give my statement. They are using the transcript of the disciplinary hearing as evidence, but I need to tell them what happened. They are also going to use the tape that I got from Eclipse. Victoria is fucked."

"That's good to hear," I breathed. "What time are you heading to the police station?"

"Early. Probably sometime before nine. I want to get this done," Edward sighed. "What time are you heading to New York City?"

## La Cantante

"Your mom is picking us up at eight. Another road trip with Alice. Yay!" I said sarcastically.

"Sorry, baby," Edward replied, gently rubbing my cheek. We pulled into the parking lot for Costas and headed into the restaurant. We definitely didn't fit in there tonight. We were both wearing our Breaking Midnight attire and the rest of the restaurant was stuffier. We were sat in a corner and we enjoyed a quiet meal. Edward tried to get me to tell him what I was looking for in a wedding dress. I said that he'd have to wait until he saw me walk down the aisle. Honestly, I had no clue what I was looking for. The only prerequisite was that it not be huge. I didn't want to look like a bell.

We finished our dinner and drove to Eclipse to set up our equipment. Our performance was going to be a fly by the seat of our pants gig tonight. We didn't have time to rehearse and Edward was focused on his hearing. I pulled together the set list and all of the songs were ones we had performed before. Edward was grateful that I didn't throw any curveballs in the set list and I said I wasn't that cruel.

The crowd was insane at Eclipse. There was absolutely no room on the dance floor and there was a line sweeping around the building. I asked Edward if it was like this last week. Edward nodded and told me about how people were asking for pictures and autographs. I was cringing at that. I love being on stage, but that aspect of performing is something I don't like. Before we performed, Kellan came in and gave us our paycheck from the guys' performance from last weekend. I put the check into my messenger bag and gave Kellan a smile. He then asked us if we were available to perform on Wednesday and Saturday this week. We all checked our schedules and it worked out. Edward asked if it was okay if we did the same set list for both nights. Kellan suggested we change a few songs, but it would okay.

We played in front of a packed house. The screams were deafening and the lights were blazing. The energy in the room was palpable. We fed off the crowd and it showed in our performance. It was one of the best ones to date. We finished our set and exited the stage. Kellan offered us the VIP lounge, but we all decided to bow out. Edward was emotionally and mentally drained from

## La Cantante

the happenings of the day. Emmett was getting sick and Jasper wanted to take Alice out. We all scattered and headed back to our respective homes. As soon as we were back in our apartment, Edward stripped off his clothes and flopped onto the bed. I giggled and I went into the bathroom to wash my face and take out my contacts. I came out and put on my pajamas. Edward hadn't moved and he was snoring on the bed. I pulled back the covers and did my best to put him under them. He would not move. I gave up after a few tries and settled into sleep after I set my alarm.

xx LC xx

"Bella?" Edward crooned

"Hmmm?"

"Your alarm is going off. Wake up, beautiful."

"Nooooo! Want to sleep!" I cried. "So comfy!"

"Me too, love. However, Alice has already texted me twice to make sure that you get up," Edward snickered. "She's really pumped to get your wedding dress."

"That makes one of us," I moaned into his chest.

"Aren't you excited about getting married?" Edward asked, his voice sounding sad.

"I'm extraordinarily excited about getting married. Trying on a million wedding dresses? Not so much," I explained. "I'd rather spend the day in bed with you."

"Hmmm, that sounds nice," Edward hummed. He snaked his arms around my body, holding me close. I opened my eyes and leaned in for a kiss. Things were starting to get heated when my phone began vibrating on the bedside table. I groaned and rolled over to get my phone. I looked at the caller ID. *Alice*. I threw the phone onto the bed and went back to making out with my sexy

## La Cantante

fiancé. Edward's phone shrilled from his side of the bed. He picked it up and rolled his eyes. "You are a cockblocker, Mary Alice."

I snorted and fell over in a fit of giggles. Edward was holding the phone to his ear, making fun of Alice. I heard Alice scream at Edward and he abruptly pulled the phone away. Edward tentatively put the phone back up to his ear and Alice started yelling again. He sheepishly handed me the cell phone. "She wants to talk to you."

"Fuck my life. I'm in the shower," I said as I darted out of the bed. Edward's strong arm snagged me around the waist and he threw me back down on the bed, straddling my legs.

"If I have to talk to my evil sister and get yelled at, so do you," Edward said with a smirk. "Here. I'm not moving until you're done."

"Can you at least move down? You're on my bladder and have to pee," I squirmed. Edward moved down minutely and held the phone out. I stuck my tongue out and snatched the phone from his hand. He leaned down and blew a raspberry on my neck and I squealed. "Hello, Mary Alice."

"I'm not a cockblocker, Isabella Marie. You two fuck like bunnies," she sniped.

"Do not."

"Do to. Don't deny it. If you could, Edward's cock would be permanently inserted into your pussy," Alice stated.

*That would be nice. He feels so good there. Maybe we can have a quickie.*

"BELLA! Focus, woman! No thinking about my brother's dick!" Alice shouted.

"Damn it," I mumbled. Edward gave me a sexy smirk and he rotated his hips over my body. "Your brother is grinding on me right now. It's turning me on, Alice."



## La Cantante

"Like I said, you fuck like bunnies. Focus, Bella. Are you ready to go?"

"What do I need to do in order to be 'ready to go?'" I asked.

"Have you shaved? Do you have the appropriate undergarments? Have you researched what type of dress you want?" she rattled off.

"Have I shaved? Yes. Appropriate undergarments? I'm thinking of going commando. Research? Nope," I snarked.

"Isabella Marie Swan, soon to be Cullen! You are incorrigible! Do I need to think of everything?"

Edward's eyes had darkened and he moved his magical fingers under my tank top. He was gently fondling my breasts and I could feel his cock become hard through his boxers. "Huh? What?"

"Put Edward on the phone," Alice demanded.

I held up the phone to Edward and he pouted. "What, you little cockblocking fairy?" he barked into the phone. "You suck, Mary Alice." Edward crawled off my body and scowled. He handed me the phone. "I've been banned from the bedroom. She said she would stay with us for a month, sleeping in between us, if I didn't stop distracting you."

I grabbed the phone from him and growled, "Mary Alice Brandon Cullen, you are the devil." Edward snickered and left the bedroom, shaking his ass before he exited. I threw a pillow at him and rolled my eyes.

"No. I'm just...just...FOCUS! Bella! Seriously. You're choosing the most important dress of your life today. I can't afford to have you not pay attention. Edward and his little sexual antics are distracting you from your goal. You fuck fifty ways until Sunday when we get home."

"Promise?" I wheedled.

## La Cantante

"I promise. Back to the task at hand, wedding dress?" Alice chided.

"Go on, Alice."

"Bring a strapless bra and a pair of heels. Also, how can you call yourself a woman? You haven't researched what type of dress you want? For shame, Bella," Alice admonished.

"Oh, I'm sorry, Alice. I was kind of focused on school and Edward's hearing for the past few days. Also, the show last night at Eclipse. It really wasn't that high on my list of priorities," I said sarcastically.

"Well, we're going to have come up with a plan on our way to Kleinfelds. Have you heard from your mom?"

"Yeah. She can't make it. Bring your camera, if we do decide to get something," I said.

"I already have my camera and we're just waiting for Esme. She'll be here soon. So get ready. Chop! Chop!" Alice shouted.

"Okay, you little psycho wedding fairy," I mumbled. "I'll see you in a bit."

"Later, Bella," Alice chimed and she hung up her phone.

I ended the call and flopped back onto the bed. I grabbed Edward's pillow and smothered my face, screaming into it. Edward darted back into the bedroom. He pulled the pillow from my face and gave me a smirk, "Alice driving you nuts?"

"You can say that," I said, leaning back on my elbows. "She's the fucking wedding Nazi. Jeez! You have it so lucky. You have to show up in a tux, on time and THAT'S IT!"

"If I could, I'd wear a big, poufy white dress, Bella," Edward said, barely containing his amusement.

## La Cantante

"You don't have the chest, Edward. You need to have boobs," I said, twisting his nipple. He yelped and narrowed his eyes. He pinned my body with his and he snarled. I felt the vibration threw my chest and I wanted him. Edward's phone chirped from the bed and he rolled his eyes, picking up the offending object. "Alice?"

"Evil little sprite," Edward grumbled. "Up." He scrambled off of me and held out his hands. I grabbed them and he easily hefted me off the bed and over his shoulder.

"Edward!" I squealed. "Put me down."

"Nope. Alice says you need to shower," Edward laughed. "However, she said I can help you."

"Oh. Okay, I can handle that," I giggled.

Edward walked us to the bathroom and started the water. He gingerly put me down and helped me out of my pajamas. He stripped off his boxers and dragged me into the shower. He pinned me against the wall and he ran his nose along my jaw. "I want you, Bella. I want to make you feel so good, baby," he murmured against my skin. "I want to taste you, beautiful." He moved to his knees and pulled one of my legs over his shoulder.

"Edward," I moaned and fisted his wet hair. He nuzzled my sex with his nose and he hummed against my skin. He pressed an open-mouthed kiss to my inner thigh, biting down on the sensitive skin. Edward moved his mouth slowly, painfully slowly to my core. He gently licked my clit and I yelped. He smiled and put more pressure on my sensitive nub. With his other hand, he moved his fingers along my slick, wet folds. I rotated my hips and threw my head back. "I need to feel you, Edward."

He pulled my clit into his mouth, sucking hard. As he did so, he plunged two fingers into my body, curling them inside. I groaned and moved hips to create more friction. Edward pumped his hand in and out of my body, creating the most amazing feelings. "You taste so good, Bella. So sweet." Edward moved

his other hand to one of my breasts and squeezed in gently. He looked up at me, through his long lashes as he pleased me with his mouth. He added a third finger to my pussy and increased the speed of his movements. I moved my hips faster, staring at the beautiful man between my legs. Edward's eyes were so dilated, I couldn't see any green in his irises. They were completely black. I knew mine were the same. He bit down on my clit and I screamed. "Come for me, Bella. I need to feel your body react," he growled. He turned and bit down on my inner thigh, marking me. I moved my hips and body faster against his hand and his face. "I love it when you come, Bella." His words were bringing me closer to the edge. His fingers moved faster, curling and pumping into my body. His tongue lapped my clit and I felt my muscles begin to quake. I moved one of my hands to my breasts and my other hand pulled roughly on Edward's hair. He snarled and bit down on my clit. I exploded on his hand and on his face. He gasped and kept his mouth on my body. I felt my knees buckle and Edward eased me onto the floor of the shower. I took deep breaths, slowly calming my body down. I looked at him and he was smiling at me. "Did you enjoy that, Bella?"

No capable of forming coherent thoughts, I merely nodded and pulled him to my face. I kissed his soft lips, tasting my arousal on his tongue. I hummed and smiled against his face. "You are amazing, Edward."

He blushed and gave me a crooked smirk. "I wanted to do that last night, but I fell asleep on you. I'm sorry, beautiful."

"Edward, yesterday was a roller coaster," I chuckled. "I completely understand why you fell asleep on me. However, you more than made up for it just now. I love you, baby."

"I love you, too, Bella," Edward replied. "I'm probably going to make you late now. I'm sorry."

"I'm not. I'd rather be doing *that* then buying a wedding dress. I just want a dress to hop out at me and say 'Pick Me!' No bothering to try it on and such."

## La Cantante

"Alice wouldn't get her fun, though," Edward snorted as he got up from the floor of the shower. He held out his hands and helped me off the ground. He reached for my shampoo and lathered up my hair. I laid my hands on his chest as he washed my long, chestnut tresses.

"And who's wedding is it? Her or ours?" I mumbled.

"It's our wedding, but she's insane, Bella," Edward chuckled.

He pushed me back into the hot spray, rinsing the suds from my hair. He gently washed me with my body wash as I did the same for him. We finished our shower and Edward draped me in a towel. We walked out to the bedroom and I pulled on some lacy white boy shorts. As I was pulling up my panties, I noticed a huge bruise on my inner thigh. "Edward Anthony Masen Cullen. Look what you did!"

"What?" he barked. I pointed to the 'love bite' on my inner thigh and he smiled hugely. "It proves that your mine, baby."

"Edward, that's what *this* is for," I said as I held up my left ring finger. "Not physical bruising. Christ!"

"Sorry, Bella," he said contritely. "I just lost control. You taste so good."

"I'm glad you enjoy my flavor, but damn!" I moaned as I ran my fingers over the sensitive flesh. "I really think you are part vampire. All the sucking and biting you do."

"It's because you are so sweet. You are my own personal brand of heroine. I just need to get a fix," he chuckled darkly.

"You are a dork," I giggled.

"Not a dork. A vampire. Your words, not mine," he snickered. I rolled my eyes and finished getting dressed. I decided to look a little nicer. I put on a pair of black dress pants and a black v-neck sweater. I tied a bright purple scarf that

## La Cantante

Rosalie got me for Christmas around my neck. I slipped on my pair of black Mary Jane heels and put a strapless bra into my bag. I was putting finishing touches on my make up when I heard the intercom buzz. Edward jogged to get it and I heard Alice's chiming voice come over the tinny speaker. I groaned inwardly at the long car ride ahead of me. Alice was the most annoying car companion in the history of the world. She never shut up! Oy!

I picked up my purse and I headed out into the living room. Edward was wearing a pair of workout pants and t-shirt. He was working on his laptop.

"What are you doing, baby?" I asked as I sat down next to him. I gently rubbed my fingers through his damp hair. He leaned into my touch and purred. "Are you purring, Edward?"

"What? It feels good," he laughed. "You always say I do amazing things with my fingers. I think you do wonderful things with *your* fingers, baby."

"Edward, I love you, but you're weird," I giggled.

"I know," he smirked. "At least you recognize that now."

"Hello? Are we decent?" Alice chirped.

"No, Alice. We're naked on the couch, going at it like bunnies," I said dryly.

"You two are insatiable!" Rose chided.

"We've established this, Rosalie," Edward chuckled. Rose and Alice came around the corner with bewildered looks on their faces. Alice smacked Edward upside the head. "Damn it, Pixie! What was that for?"

"You sexed up, Bella," she said.

"No, I didn't sex up, Bella. We did *other* stuff," he clarified. "Evil little sprite."

"Whatever, Big Brother. Are you ready to go, Bella?" Alice asked.

## La Cantante

"Yeah. I just need to get my jacket. Does this meet with your approval?" I asked as I twirled.

"You'll do. We're stopping to get breakfast on our way out of town. It's going to be so much fun!" Alice exclaimed as she bounced on her toes.

I grabbed my leather jacket from the closet and slipped it over my shoulders. Edward wrapped his arms around my waist and put his head on my shoulder. "I'll miss you, beautiful."

"I'll be back tonight, handsome," I said as I leaned against his brawny chest. He pressed a kiss to my hair and squeezed me tighter. "I love you, Edward."

"I love you more, baby," he whispered. I turned around and kissed his soft lips. He tangled his fingers into my hair and deepened the kiss. Alice cleared her throat and pulled Edward away from me by his ear. "Alice, I'm going to kick your ass one of these days."

"Insatiable, sex-crazed maniacs are what you two are," Alice squeaked. "Keep it in your pants, Cullen."

Edward flipped her off and she kissed his cheek. Edward rolled his eyes and Alice dragged me out of the apartment, pouting the entire way. Edward watched as we entered the elevator, giving us a half-hearted wave. I blew him a kiss before the doors closed. Alice, Rose and I walked out of the apartment complex to Esme's car. She brought the Mercedes today, stating that it got better gas mileage and it was easier to drive in the city.

We pulled away from the curb and headed out onto the highway. About an hour into our drive, we stopped at a small café for breakfast. We ate our food quickly as we had a 12:30 appointment at Kleinfelds. We eased back onto the road and got to New York City a little after twelve. Esme easily wove in and out of traffic to Kleinfelds. We parked in a parking garage near the store. We saw Barbie waited outside of Kleinfelds, wearing a chic black trench coat and large sunglasses. She kissed Rose on her cheek, gently smoothing her hair. Esme and Barbie embraced, doing the 'air kiss.' Barbie hugged Alice and I and

we headed into the store.

"Hello, welcome to Kleinfelds. Can I help you?" asked the receptionist.

"We have an appointment with Sara. Isabella Swan," Esme said with a warm smile.

"Have a seat and Sara will be right with you."

Our group settled into the posh couches in the elegant salon. I picked up a wedding magazine and thumbed through the pages. Alice was shaking in her skin. Esme and Barbie were engrossed in their conversation. Rose was giving me a smile as she looked over my shoulder at the magazine. After a few moments, a young woman wearing a black dress and long dark hair came into the waiting area.

"Isabella Swan?"

"That's me," I said as I stood up.

"Hi, I'm Sara," she said as she shook my hand. "Welcome to Kleinfelds. Let's head back into a dressing room."

We all got up and walked into the salon. There were so many dresses, all of them beautiful and elegant. I felt very shabby in the store and I felt a blush creep onto my cheeks. We were led to a large dressing room. We settled into the seats and Sara sat facing us.

"Congratulations on your engagement, Isabella."

"Bella, please," I said with a smile.

"Okay, Bella. Who do you have with you today?" Sara questioned.

"This is Esme Cullen, my future mother-in-law. Alice Cullen and Rosalie Hale, my maids of honor. And last is Barbie Hale, Rosalie's mother," I answered.



## La Cantante

"Where's your mom?" Sara asked with a frown.

"She lives in Jacksonville and couldn't afford to come up here. She said to take pictures," I laughed.

"We have a webcam feature here and we can use that if you want," Sarah suggested.

"That sounds good," I smiled.

"When is your wedding date?" Sara asked.

"August 13th of this year," I answered.

Sara jotted the date down on the clipboard she was carrying. "What are you looking for in a wedding dress?"

"Um, I honestly don't know. The only thing I know for sure is that I don't want to be enveloped in a bell-like dress," I answered.

"Okay, well, let me pull a few dresses and we can narrow down what you like and what you don't like. What's your price point?"

"Um..." I floundered.

"There's really no limit," Esme jumped in. "I'll be paying for the dress as a wedding present."

"Okay. Well, let me pull a few things. I'll be back in a little bit," Sara said with a huge smile.

"Can I come with?" Alice chirped. "I saw a few dresses that might work on Bella."

"Sure, Alice. Right?"

## La Cantante

"Yep!" Alice hopped out of the chair and followed Sara onto the floor. Rose, Esme and Barbie went out into the salon and I removed my clothes and put on my strapless bra. I eased a silky robe over my shoulders and waited for Sara and Alice to return. Fifteen minutes later, Alice and Sara returned with their arms full of white dresses. My eyes bugged out and I started to hyperventilate. "Bella, you need to relax," Alice laughed. "Trust us. Sara and I picked out some beautiful dresses."

I nodded mutely and I tried to calm my breathing. Alice kissed my cheek and darted out to the salon with the rest of the group. Sara removed the first dress from the plastic covering. It was an off white strapless dress with a large flower on the left hip and lace underskirt. It was pretty. However, I wanted a white dress. Sara lifted the dress over my shoulders and zipped me into the dress, clipping it to my body. I was amazed at the tiny waist the dress gave me. I liked the cut and strapless part of the dress, but this wasn't my dress.

"So?" Sara asked.

"I like the cut and the strapless part, but I'm not a fan of the color or the lace," I answered.

"Do you want to show your group?"

I nodded and hefted the dress over my feet. Sara lifted the hem and we walked out to the salon. I stood on the small pedestal in front of them. They cooed over the dress, but they weren't wowed. We noted the things we liked and headed back into the dressing room. Sara removed the dress and put in the 'no' pile. The next dress was along the same lines as the first dress, except it was white and had intricate beading on the bodice. It also gathered over the right hip in a ruching style that was very flattering. I definitely liked this one a lot more. It was simple and classic. Sara lifted the dress and we walked out to the salon.

"Oh, Bella!" Esme sighed. "This is beautiful. I like this one."

"So do I. I like this," I said as I pointed to the ruching, "And the beading."

## La Cantante

"Is this your dress, Bella?" Sara asked.

"It's on the list," I answered. Sara held up one finger and grabbed a veil and placed it on my head, along with a tiara. "Definitely on the list."

Sara smiled and led me back to the room after we spent a few moments discussing the finer points of the dress. When we got back to the room, Sara put the dress I had on back on the hanger. After the last dress, we immediately nixed a few dresses that were not me. The next dress was different. It had the intricate beading on the bodice and a dropped waist. The skirt was fuller and had a chiffon overlay with pick ups that had beads in them. I really liked this one. Even better than the last dress. We headed back out into the salon and the girls gasped at this dress.

"Bella! I love it!" Alice chirped. "I picked this one out! Do you like it?"

I looked at myself in the mirror and I didn't see Bella Swan anymore. I saw Bella Cullen. I saw my future and I smiled. Sara placed a veil on my head, along with a headband. Rose found a bouquet of flowers and handed them to me. Barbie grabbed a necklace and placed it around my neck. This was it. This was the dress I was going to marry Edward in. The tears gathered in my eyes and spilled onto my cheeks.

"Happy tears, Bella?" Sara asked as she handed me a kleenex.

I nodded and dabbed my cheeks. I turned in the mirror and looked at the back of the dress. It was as beautiful as the front.

"Is this your dress, Bella?" Sara asked as she put her arm around my waist.

"Yes. This is my dress," I cried. Sara gave me a hug and I eagerly accepted.

Sara scampered off and got her manager to measure me for my dress. I looked at the price tag and I nearly had a heart attack. Esme came up to me and put her arm around my shoulders. "Bella, don't worry about the price. It's my gift to you."

## La Cantante

"Thank you, Esme," I said quietly, putting my arms around her neck.

"Bella, the veil and the accessories are my gift to you," Barbie said as she flanked the other side. I gave her a watery smile, hugging her as well.

"Thank you, Barbie," I whispered into her soft hair.

Sara's manager returned and measured me for my gown. Alice snapped a few pictures to send to my mom. The dress would be ready in the middle of June for pick up and would need to be altered. We then decided to look at bridesmaid dresses. Alice and Rose were giddy at the prospect of trying on dresses. They wanted me to get the dresses from Kleinfelds, but I said I wanted them to be affordable. The cheapest dress we saw there was about \$1000. Alice and Rose can afford that, but Angela couldn't. Esme agreed with me and said we could find something more affordable. We ended up going to Macy's and found the dresses there. They were a deep, eggplant purple with spaghetti straps and similar pick ups on the skirt. There was some beading on the top of the bodice. They were quite elegant.

We got lunch after getting the bridesmaid dresses. I texted a picture of what my dress and the bridesmaid dresses were like to Angela. She nearly had a heart attack. We had already ordered her dress from Macy's, using Rose as the guide. Angela and Rosalie were about the same height and weight. However, Rose had more of a bust than Angela. Barbie paid for the bridesmaid dresses, much to my chagrin. We decided to head back to Emerson after lunch. Rose decided to stay with her mom and said she'd see us tomorrow. On the way home, Alice and I both fell asleep for the entire ride.

Esme gently woke me up when she pulled up to the apartment. "You're home, Bella."

I blinked my eyes and gave her a sleepy smile. It was a little after eight at night. "Sorry about being such a bad car companion," I mumbled.

"It's not a big deal. You did a lot of work today," Esme giggled. "Your dress is beautiful. Edward will love it."

## La Cantante

"I know. When I looked at it, I didn't see 'Bella Swan.' I saw 'Bella Cullen,'" I sighed. "It's becoming real now. I can't believe it."

"Believe it, Bella. I'm so happy that you came into our lives," Esme replied. "The change in my son is phenomenal. He was always so melancholy and now we see a sparkle and life in his eyes. We can thank you for that."

"He did the same for me. I was determined to be alone for the rest of my life after what Jacob told me," I answered. "I felt like I was nothing. However, Edward's words, kindness and love proved to me otherwise. Thank you for paying for my wedding dress, Esme. It was too much."

"Nonsense, Bella. In my eyes, you're already my daughter," Esme scoffed. "You must be exhausted. Go up to your fiancé. Tell him I love him."

"I will, Esme. I love you," I said as I reached across the console, giving her a hug.

"Love you, too, sweetheart," Esme said. I scrambled out of the car and walked to the entrance to the apartment. I gave Esme a wave and she drove off. I unlocked the door and headed to the elevator. I spaced out and hadn't realized that the doors to the lift had opened. I darted out of the elevator and walked to our door. I unlocked it and slipped inside.

"Hello? Edward?" I called out.

Edward appeared from the bedroom, holding something in his hands. "Bella, what's this?"

*Fuck my life.*

**A/N: What do you think Edward found? Up next a mini trip with University Singers.**

# Good Vibrations

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 73: Good Vibrations

### EPOV

After Bella left with Rosalie and Alice to get her wedding dress, I put on some jeans and a green polo and headed over to the police station to give my statement about Victoria. I pulled the car into a visitor's spot and headed to the receptionist.

"Hello, I need to speak with Detective Lutz," I said.

"What's your name?" the receptionist asked.

"Edward Cullen," I answered.

"Have seat. Detective Lutz will be with you in a moment."

I nodded and sat down in the chairs. I nibbled on my fingernails as I waited for Detective Lutz to come out. He appeared and he gave me a friendly smile.

"Hello, Edward. Thanks for coming in."

I held out my hand and shook his. "No problem. I want to just put this behind me."

"Understandable. This way," Detective Lutz said as he led me into the conference room. He took out a legal pad of paper and sat down facing me.

"So, tell me about what happened with Ms. St. Peters?"

## La Cantante

"She was the teaching assistant for my music theory and aural harmony class. During class, she would give me unsettling looks and would touch me without my permission as she was distributing papers. Lightly scratch my arm or run her fingers through my hair. That kind of thing.

"After Valentine's day, we had an assessment in aural harmony where we had to sight read a piece of music in a practice room, one on one with her. As I did my test, she came behind me and wrapped her arms around my waist, laying her head on my shoulders. I asked her to back away, but she refused to do so. I tried more forcefully to get her to move away from me, but she wouldn't. I completely jacked up my test because of her intrusion. I spoke with my professor about the whole situation and he mentioned it to her. She flat out denied it. She said that I was propositioning her, which was not the case.

"She would shoot me hateful glares during class after my professor mentioned it to her the rest of the week. On that Friday, Victoria was at Eclipse, the club where my band performs. After our set, I went to the bathroom and she cornered me in the men's restroom. She locked the door and blocked it. She put her arms around me and again ran her fingers through my hair. I gently pushed her away, reiterating that I was NOT interested in the slightest. She then shoved me, with surprising force, into the wall and kissed me. She thrust her tongue down my throat and pulled on my hair. I moved my face away from hers and she continued kissing my face until I pushed her away. I said I was engaged to be married and that I was not interested. She slapped me. She said that she was going to go to the dean, saying I propositioned her for sex to get a better grade. No one would believe me, since she was an 'innocent' woman and I was a big man. I laughed and pointed to the security cameras in the bathroom and she screamed before stomping out," I explained.

"Other than the slap, did she touch you in a malicious way any other time?" Detective Lutz asked.

"No. It was just unwanted caresses and touches. The only time she was cruel was when she hit me at Eclipse," I answered.

"You never slept with her?"

"Hell no!" I retorted.

"She's saying she's pregnant and that you're the father," Detective Lutz said with a sad smile.

"Well, it isn't mine, if she is pregnant. I never slept with her, ever," I said as I crossed my arms over my chest. "Anything else?"

"I don't think so. Based off your statement, she's going to be charged with assault and battery, along with a sexual misconduct charge. The DA probably is going to plead her out. There might not be a trial. However, if there is one, you'll be notified. Thank you for coming in," Detective Lutz said.

"Thanks," I snorted. I held out my hand and shook the detective's hand. I turned on my heel and headed out of the small room, royally pissed.

*Pregnant? She's saying I fathered her child? What the fuck? Stupid bitch.*

I drove home and changed into some workout clothes. I needed to hit something, to get rid of my pent up anger over this whole situation. I plugged in my headphones into my ears and got onto a treadmill. I started to walk as a warm up and I eased the speed up until I was moving at a steady trot. I ran for about an hour and then moved to the punching bag in the workout room. I picked up a pair of boxing gloves and began working the bag. I was really into it, as I didn't hear someone come into the room. I felt a beefy hand on my shoulder. I spun around, ready to pounce.

"Whoa, Eddie! Relax!" Emmett cried. He was in a baseball cap, hoodie and some workout pants.

I pulled my hands out of the gloves and removed my headphones. "How did you get in here? You need to be buzzed in."

"I ran into Alistair. I told him I was Bella's brother and he asked to see my driver's license. He let me in when he saw I had the same last name as Isabelly. I went up to your apartment and you weren't there. I came back down and



## La Cantante

Alistair said you were in the gym," Emmett explained. "What did the punching bag ever do to you?"

"Just working out some frustrations," I grumbled.

"Does this have something to do with that psycho bitch who kissed you in the bathroom last weekend?" Emmett asked.

"Yep. I had to go to the police station to give my statement for her arrest," I replied as I plopped down on one of the workout benches. I chugged my water and ran a towel over my face.

"You want me to spot you?" Emmett asked. I looked back and saw I was on the bench press. I shrugged and laid back. Emmett put on some weights onto the bar and I put my hands on the bar, easing it off the bench. I blew out a breath and began pumping the bar to my chest. Emmett's hands stayed near the bar, preparing to grab it if I needed him to. I put the bar back after fifteen reps. "So, what happened at the police station that made you attack the punching bag, Edward?"

"She said that she's pregnant," I sighed as I looked up at him. "She's saying that I'm the father. Which is total bullshit. I never even touched her. I couldn't have gotten her pregnant unless I'm God and it was Immaculate Conception." I reached for the bar and did another set of fifteen reps. I could feel the burn in my arms and chest and it felt good.

"Let's spar," Emmett said as he pulled off his hoodie and put his cap on backwards.

"Emmett, you can easily kick my ass," I said warily. "You also are huge. I'm a weakling musician."

"Oh please, you just bench pressed two hundred pounds," Emmett chuckled. I looked at the bar and quickly did the math. I did just bench press two hundred pounds. Sweet. "You've got muscle. You're wiry. I promise, I'll avoid your face. I know Bella would kick my ass if I gave you a black eye or a broken

nose. She thinks you're so 'pretty.'"

"You're a douche, Emmett," I said as we moved to the mats. "I'm not pretty."

"According to Bella, you're beautiful," he chuckled as he fluttered his eyes.

I snarled and I held up my hands after I slipped on a pair of boxing gloves. Emmett did the same. We spent an hour punching at each other and it was the best workout I'd ever had. Emmett and I headed up to my apartment and I offered him the shower in the guest bathroom to hose off. He gladly accepted. I pulled out a pair basketball shorts that Bella stole from Emmett and my largest hoodie for him to wear home. I hopped into the shower and I could already feel my body protest at the harsh workout I gave it. When I got out of the shower, I found Emmett sitting on the couch, with his feet up on the coffee table. I smacked his feet and scowled at him. "Feet off the table. Where were you raised? In a barn?"

"Fuck me, Cullen. You sound all domestic and shit," Emmett snorted. He plopped his feet onto the floor.

"We have nice stuff in here and I want to keep it that way. I know I didn't pay for it, but I want to maintain a nice apartment," I said as I crossed my arms. "So what did you want? You came over here for a reason."

"Uh, yeah. I need your help," Emmett said.

"With what, Em?" I asked.

"Before we talk, do you have anything to eat? All that working out has built up an appetite," Emmett said with a crooked smirk.

"I think we have some pizza. Hold on," I said as I went into the kitchen. I pulled out a frozen pizza and preheated the oven. I grabbed a bag of chips and salsa and put it into a bowl, carrying it to the living room. "Here's a snack until the pizza's done."

## La Cantante

"Thanks, Cullen," Emmett said as he dug into the chips.

"So, what do you need help with?" I asked as I snagged a chip.

"Um, fuck," Emmett floundered. "You're good at this romantic shit."

"Okay. If you say so," I chuckled.

"You are. All of the girls are always saying how you know what to do. You're like the king of romantic."

"The point, Emmett?" I asked.

"Right, the point. I want to propose to Rosalie. I need your romantic brain to help me plan the proposal," Emmett said.

"Dude, you're asking me to help plan your proposal?"

"Yeah! You totally swept Isabelly off her feet when you proposed," Emmett said with a smirk.

"It wasn't overwhelmingly romantic, Em. I proposed at midnight at New Year's Eve. A million guys probably had the same idea," I replied.

"Probably, but Bella loved it. Perhaps it wasn't when you proposed but how you proposed," Emmett clarified. "You have this uncanny way with words."

"Emmett, I'm not telling you how to propose to Rosalie. If there's one thing you need to know, it's you need to be yourself. If I tell you what to do, then it's not *you*. She'll know that you got help," I reasoned. "Sure, I may have a way with words, but they come from the heart. It's not something you can script out."

"You're right, Edward. I just don't know what to do," Emmett said as he leaned back on the cushions. "I know I want to marry her. She's the one. She makes me complete and I don't want to live without her."

## La Cantante

I smiled at Emmett and the oven dinged. I got up and took out the pizza, dishing out a couple slices for each of us. "Emmett, if you say what you feel in your heart, Rosalie will think it's the most fantastic, romantic thing in the history of time. Have you talked about marriage?"

Emmett swallowed an entire piece of pizza whole. I was a bit scared. "In passing. Nothing really solid. She's mentioned that she wants to get married. However, does she want to get married to me is the question?"

"I think your first step is to talk about where you see your relationship in the future," I suggested as I polished my first slice of pizza.

"How did you do it with Bella? Talk about marriage?" Emmett asked.

"From the beginning of our relationship, I've always known that she was the woman for me. I told her that from the start. We've always had this special bond. It's a connection that I can't describe. Did I ever expect to be engaged at 20, getting married by 21? No. Did I want to get married? Yes. Have I ever questioned my relationship with Bella? Definitely not."

"What's this connection you talked about?" Emmett asked.

"Whenever we touch, it feels like a bolt of energy ignites over my skin. It happens every time. I am distraught when I'm separated from her, almost to the point of where I need to be with her. I knew something was wrong with her both times Jacob popped out of the woodwork. When she was asleep from her concussion, I was so sick, I thought I'd die if she didn't make it. It's such a pull toward each other, it's difficult to describe. It's overwhelming," I explained. "Make sense?"

"Kind of. Does she feel the same way?"

"I think so," I answered. "We've never really talked about it. The one thing I know for certain is that we love each other, irrevocably and nothing can change that."

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Emmett sat back on the couch, scratching his head. "So, I should talk to Rosie about marriage."

"Not that bluntly, but have the conversation. Feel her out. See where she wants the relationship to progress. However, don't push her. Rose, while very tenacious, is fragile. She nearly had an anxiety attack when I told her about my hearing with Victoria. She got some very freaky flashbacks."

"Yeah, she told me about that. She's very sensitive to anyone who has to go through an ordeal like that. I know you weren't like raped or anything, but Victoria did violate your personal space and wishes and should be punished," Emmett said as he patted my knee. "I'm going to go. Thanks for the pizza, Eddie."

"Emmett," I growled.

"Sorry, *Edward*," Emmett teased. "Thanks for the advice. You know you're pretty smart and shit."

"Thanks, Em. I appreciate the compliment?" I laughed. "I'll see you later."

"Hasta la bye bye," Emmett said as he breezed out of the apartment, swiping another piece of pizza. I snickered and finished my lunch. I sat back on the couch, after I took a few ibuprofen as a precaution, to watch some television. I ended up watching some movie about 9/11 and some guy who was in college, but not, dying in the attacks. Pierce Brosnan was in it. It was good.

When the movie was over, I started cleaning the apartment. It was pretty nice out and I cracked the door to the patio and lit a few candles as I worked. I cranked my music and danced through my chores. Bella would be very happy. She was always cleaning and fussing around the apartment. I felt like such a slacker. I dusted and vacuumed the two bedrooms and the living room. I scoured both of the bathrooms and kitchen. The apartment was sparkling by the time I was done. I was quite pleased with myself and decided to have a congratulatory beer. As I was drinking my beer, I went and put some things back in the bedroom that were scattered around the apartment. I found Bella's

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cell phone charger and I knew she put it in the top drawer of the bedside table. I opened the drawer and dropped the charger into it. However, something caught my eye in the drawer. I know I shouldn't snoop, but it was pink. Bella hates pink.

I pulled out a vaguely penis shaped, plastic thing. Upon closer inspection, I noticed a power button. Holy crap, Bella had a vibrator.

*What the fuck? Am I not good enough?*

I frowned and put the vibrator on the bed. I stared at the offensive item and scrunched my nose. I heard the keys rattle in the door and she called out. "Hello? Edward?"

I picked up the vibrator and walked out to the hallway. "Bella, what's this?" I asked, holding up the pink penis, that was so not mine.

Her eyes got as big as saucers and she blushed a bright pink. "Edward, your sister got it for me," she squeaked. "Please don't be mad. When we went to the store for Valentine's day, she picked it up and I thought it was for her. Not me. I didn't realize that she had stuck it in my bag until I got home. I just stuck it in the bed side drawer. I haven't used it."

"Baby, relax," I said as I put the vibrator on the hall table. "You're having a mini meltdown."

"Please, say that you're not mad," Bella whimpered.

"Bella, I'm not mad. I'm just surprised, that's all. I thought I wasn't meeting your *needs*," I said as I pulled her into my arms.

"Trust me, Edward. You definitely make me a very happy in that aspect. Very much. I have absolutely no complaints," Bella mumbled into my chest.

"So, you haven't used it?" I asked, curiously.

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"No. Why would I need to? I have you," she said, quirking a brow.

"Are you curious about how it may make you feel?" I pressed. I was curious as to how it may cause her body to react.

"Are you?" Bella challenged.

"Possibly," I smirked. I picked up the vibrator and turned it on. It had some power. "I can think of a few possibilities of what I'd like to do with you, using this."

"Fuck me," she muttered, her eyes dilating.

I pushed her jacket off her shoulders and tugged on her hand toward the bedroom. I flipped off the vibrator, tossing it on the bed and gently cupped her face. I looked into her deep, chocolate brown eyes. I leaned down and brushed my lips across hers. She moaned and opened her mouth. I pushed my tongue between her lips and moved it languidly inside her mouth. She pulled my hips closer to hers, swiveling her body against mine. I groaned and moved my hands to her ass. I picked her up and she wrapped her legs around my waist. My body protested as I picked her up. I was sore from my workout, but I didn't care. I carried her to the bed, laying her in the center. I hovered over her and pulled my face away from hers. Bella reached for my hem of my shirt, pulling it off my body. I tossed the shirt onto the floor. I lifted up Bella's sweater and put it on the floor with my shirt. She was wearing a sweet, lacy white bra. She looked so innocent and it turned me on. I grazed my fingers down her body, in between her breasts and down her torso. She whimpered and squirmed under my touch. "Edward, please."

I arched a brow and picked up the vibrator. I flipped it on and ran it over her breasts. She moaned and arched her back. She reached behind her body and unsnapped her bra, flinging it across the room. I tossed the vibrator on the bed and I pulled one of her breasts into my teeth, biting down on the nipple. Her hands took purchase in my hair, pulling on it forcefully. Her moans were growing in volume. So was my cock; it was growing. I reached for the button of Bella's pants and removed them from her long, lean limbs. I could feel how

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wet she was through her panties. I growled and I moved my lips to her mouth. She nibbled on my bottom lip, wrapping her legs around my waist. She pulled me toward her, causing me to fall on my elbows to prevent from crushing her. I reached between us and I ran my fingers over her clit, above her panties. She bucked her hips and spread her legs further. I pulled away and pushed down my workout pants that I had thrown on after my shower.

Bella looked at me, her eyes wild and her lips swollen. I reached for her panties and she lifted her hips to help me get them off her body. I removed them and put them on the floor. I spread her legs and picked up the vibrator. I arched a brow and she pulled her lip between her teeth. I flipped it on and ran it along her inner thighs. Her mouth formed an 'o' and she exhaled sharply. I could see her arousal grow and it poured out of her body. I growled and moved the vibrator closer to her glistening pink flesh. I pressed my lips to her inner thighs and moved the vibrator to her clit. Her hips bucked violently, almost causing me to lose control and she screamed. "Holy mother of God," she moaned.

*I think she likes it.*

I lightly rubbed the vibrator over her sensitive nub and I continued to kiss her legs and thighs. With my other hand, I slipped two fingers into her slick folds. She was so fucking wet, it was dripping down my hands and onto the bed. Her hips were moving an erotic pace, moving against my hand and the vibrator. It was almost like she didn't have control over the reaction of her body. My cock was straining in my boxers and I wanted to bury myself so deeply in her pussy.

I adjusted the vibrator to higher setting and Bella screamed, loudly. I added a third finger and curled them in her body. I could feel her muscles quake around my fingers and her juices pour down my arm and hand. I was watching her come undone with rapt attention. I kissed her thighs, biting down on the mark I had given her earlier in the day and her muscles clamped around my fingers and she came so suddenly. Her body lifted off the bed and she screamed gutturally. Her juices flowed from her body and I eagerly licked and kissed them up, wanting to taste every part of her. I pulled the vibrator away and tore off my boxers. I dragged Bella to the edge of the bed and looked at her. She was in a haze, but she wanted me. She whimpered and I plunged my cock into



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her body. I felt her muscles clamp around me and she came again.

*Holy shit.*

I moved her legs so they were over my shoulders and she moaned as I leaned forward. I pounded my cock into her and she groaned. "Edward. Feels so good"

"Fuck, baby. You are so tight," I grunted as I drove into her. Her body reacted and she clenched around me for a third time. Her eyes were screwed shut and her hands moved to her breasts.

I pulled her legs off my shoulders and I kissed her swollen lips. She knotted her fingers into my hair and held my face to hers. I moved my hips faster and she swiveled her hips in the same rhythm as mine. She was amazing and I couldn't get enough of her. "Edward, I'm so close. Harder, baby."

I pulled away and moved her hips higher on my legs. I moved deeper into her hot, wet pussy than I'd ever reached. I felt the coil in my belly begin to tighten. I reached between us and ran my fingers over her clit. She rocked her body on cock and my body was reacting to her movements. The combination of her movement, her pussy and the wild look in her eyes was my undoing. "God, Bella. You are amazing. I love you, baby."

"I love you, so much, Edward," she moaned. "Don't stop. It feels so good." I smirked and pulled one of her legs over my shoulder. I was hitting her g-spot. Her muscles began to quake again and I moaned. After a few more thrusts, I felt my dick twitch and the coil in my belly begin to spring. Bella screamed and she clamped down on my cock. I roared and spilled into her. I fell forward onto my elbows. I peppered her neck, jaw, ears and mouth with kisses. She giggled and eagerly accepted them. "Are you still feeling inadequate?"

"Fuck no, baby. If my math is correct, you came four times," I panted.

"You are correct. It's a new record," she said as she ran her hands over my sweaty cheeks. She kissed my nose and pressed my lips to hers. I pulled away, removing myself from her body. I hated doing that. Being connected that way

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felt like home. I wanted to be with her like that forever. Unfortunately, that was not a possibility. Bella frowned when I pulled out of as well. She also liked being connected in that intimate way. She got under the covers and I followed suit. My muscles were revolting against me and I was exhausted. Bella laid her head on my chest, pressing a kiss to my heart. "I love you, Edward. I can't wait for you to see me in my dress for our wedding."

"I'm certain you're going to be beautiful," I whispered in her hair. I let out a big yawn and she chuckled. "I worked out with your brother for nearly two hours. I bushed."

"Sleep, handsome. Good night."

"Good night, Bella. I love you," I mumbled and I held her close to my chest. I quickly fell asleep and I dreamt of Bella in a beautiful white dress, becoming my wife, my love, my singer. For all eternity.

**A/N: Light fluffy chapter. With some citrus. Atomic lemon variety. Up next, engagement photos and mini-University Singers tour. Leave some love (or hate :) ).**

# Engagement Photos

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*350 reviews! I can't believe it! Thank you everyone for your kind words and suggestions! Keep 'em coming! Much love to all of you!*

## Chapter 74: Engagement Photos

### BPOV

I was so embarrassed when Edward held up the vibrator that Alice got me. I wanted to find the nearest hole and crawl into it. I was afraid that Edward was going to pissed when he found it. Thankfully, he wasn't. He was intrigued. Intrigued enough to help me try it. Boy did it feel good. Holy crap, four orgasms. It was a new record for us. Damn.

The rest of the weekend was pretty uneventful and we spent a good chunk of our day on Sunday doing homework and writing papers. I was on the desktop and Edward was on his laptop. Edward was settled on the bed in the guest bedroom, working alongside me. We also spent some time working on our project for psychology. We finished all of the assessments and added them to the power point presentation. Edward even went so far as creating actual tests as handouts for our presentation. I was working on pictures/demonstrations for the power point. It definitely will be a solid project when all is said and done.

After we finished our work, Edward booked our hotel for when we were staying in Chicago. He booked the W Hotel off of Lakeshore Drive. He got the 'Extreme Wow' Suite. Based off the pictures he showed me, it looked incredibly expensive. He said that we were staying in Chicago for a week, we might as well be comfortable. I scoffed and rolled my eyes. I would have been

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happy staying at the Super 8, but with Edward, it always has to be the best. We also called Alice and Rose to inform them where we were staying. Alice booked a suite at W Hotel, the 'Fantastic' Suite. Rose and Emmett got the 'Spectacular' Room. I was going to offer our room to anyone who couldn't afford the hotel, but Edward gave me a warning with his eyes. Apparently, he wanted me all to himself at night.

*Not that I'm complaining, but jeez.*

On Monday, Edward and I went to our classes and there was a buzz over what happened with Victoria. The hearing was 'closed' but there was speculation as why she was summarily terminated. The rumors went from she favored students, giving them passing grades on failing tests to she slept with a student and got pregnant. Only the disciplinary board, Edward, Larry, and I knew the truth. We didn't feed the rumor mill. We just ignored it. As we left theory on Monday, Larry gave Edward an envelope. He also had one for me as well. It was a letter from President Volturi requesting our presence at his office today after University Singers.

The rest of the classes were easy. We had an exam in psychology. Edward and I aced it. We went our separate ways after that. I had a biology lab and he went to intro to education. The lab we had was pretty gross. It was an urinalysis lab and it was repulsive. We got through it, but Alice and I wanted desperately to shower after class. Unfortunately, there was no time because we had to go to University Singers.

Alice and I got our folders and we saw some new music inserted in our slots. There was also two packets of paper. We settled into our seats and thumbed through the packets that we received. The first one was information about our Italy trip. It informed us what we needed to complete before our departure on May 23rd. I put the packet into my bag and turned to the second one. The second packet was about a mini-tour that University Singers was taking in the first weekend of March. We were going to go to Buffalo area and sing at several churches. We were scheduled to leave on March 3rd and return on March 8th. As I was reading the second packet, Edward plopped down next to me, removing his fleece. I turned and gave him a brief kiss. He looked at the

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music and information that we received and skimmed through it.

"We're doing the mini-tour again. Cool," Edward smiled.

"Eleazar did it last year?" I asked.

"Yep. It bonds us as a group. We went a little later and traveled around Vermont last year," Edward explained. "However, Eleazar is a bit more 'strict' with the rooming assignments."

"I can't room with you, Edward?" I teased.

"That would be a no," he frowned. "Damn it. Perhaps next year, after we're married, we can be roommates."

"I doubt it, Edward. We can be separated from each other for a few nights," I giggled, elbowing him in the ribs.

"We can, but that doesn't mean I have to like it. I don't want to sleep separately from my *wife*," Edward pouted.

"Edward, it's a few days. Get over it," Alice chirped. "Speaking of husband and wife, wedding stuff, I booked your engagement pictures."

"Um, Alice, shouldn't that be something that we decide to do?" I asked.

"If I left it up to you two, you'd be married with a gaggle of children before you got them done," Alice sighed.

"A gaggle of children," Edward and I laughed.

"Yes, a gaggle of children," Alice emphasized.

"How many are in a gaggle?" I wondered. Edward quirked a brow and shrugged.

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"Back to the pictures," Alice interrupted. "You're getting them done this weekend at the botanic gardens. You're meeting the photographer at 1. I'll be at your apartment at 10 to style both of you."

"Um, Alice? What do you mean by style?" Edward squeaked.

"Make you look handsome," Alice said as she ruffled his hair. Edward groaned and flopped back in his chair. I chuckled and added the date to my calendar. Eleazar strolled in and led us in warm ups and rehearsal. We sight read through the two new pieces that we had in our folders. Eleazar informed us that we would have sectionals on the pieces next rehearsal. We were dismissed and Edward and I went to President Volturi's office. We walked to Old Main and rode up the elevator to the sixth floor. Edward opened the door to President Volturi's office and led me inside. We were greeted with an older woman dressed in a chic pant suit and her blond hair pulled into a chignon.

"Hello. You must be Edward Cullen and Isabella Swan," the woman greeted us. "I'm Katherine Spaulding, President Volturi's assistant. I'll let him know that you're here."

"Thank you," Edward said politely. We sat down in the plush chairs in the office, waiting for Katherine to come back. I nibbled on my bottom lip nervously. Edward reached over, pulling my lip from my teeth, giving me a crooked grin. "You know what that does to me, Bella."

"Sorry, Edward," I murmured. "Nervous."

"Me too," Edward admitted.

Katherine returned and gave us a smile. "You can go in to see President Volturi."

We both got up and gave her a nod. Edward placed his hand on the small of my back and gently pushed me toward the door. It was opened slightly. I knocked and heard a faint "Come in." I pushed the door and we walked into the large, airy office of President Volturi. He was seated behind a huge desk, covered in

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stacks of papers and pictures. President Volturi was wearing thick reading glasses on his nose. His mouth was slightly open as he was writing something down. He finished what he was doing and his face broke into a huge grin. "Ah, Mr. Cullen and Miss Swan, thank you for coming to see me today."

He got up from his desk and gestured to the comfy sofa in his the corner. On a tray was a pot of tea and three cups. There was also a plate of cookies and fruit. Edward and I walked to the sofa and stiffly sat down. President Volturi sat in the matching chair. "Would you like some tea?"

We both politely nodded and President Volturi poured some tea into the cups on the table. I picked up the cup and took a sip. It was cinnamon spice, my favorite tea. I smiled and held the teacup in my lap.

"How are you both doing?" President Volturi asked.

"Fine, sir," Edward replied after took a drink of his tea.

"Excellent. Anyhow, I bet you're wondering why I asked to see you," President Volturi began. We both nodded. "Due to some bad decision making, you both have received the brunt of bad teaching assistants. First with Mr. James Loften and now with Ms. Victoria St. Peters. Their behavior was atrocious and uncalled for. They are receiving their punishment. However, you're education suffered due to their behavior. Mr. Cullen, we informed you that your tuition for this semester was going to be reimbursed. Here's the check for your tuition for the semester." He pulled out an envelope and handed it to Edward. "Upon further discussion, we decided to reimburse your entire tuition for the whole year. You are an excellent student, Mr. Cullen. You've been on the dean's list each semester you've been a student here and even with this 'drama' you've maintained a perfect GPA."

"Thank you, sir," Edward smiled. A slight blush crept over his cheeks and he ducked his head. "I've always found the classes here at Emerson to be challenging, but the professors have been very good and willing to help."

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"I'm glad you are enjoying it here. Now, Miss Swan, you've also been dealt a poor hand. Especially with Mr. Lofton. After Mr. Cullen's hearing, we discussed your situation. After our conversation, we also decided to reimburse your full tuition for the year as well. I realize that you get a scholarship, but you do pay some tuition money. Here's your reimbursement check," President Volturi said with a smile. "Like Mr. Cullen, you've maintained a perfect GPA, even in the most adverse of times. You should be very proud of yourself. Your professors speak very highly of you and consider you to be one of the best and brightest here at the University."

*And cue MY blush.*

"Thank you, President Volturi. It means a lot to hear you say that," I said quietly, sipping my drink. "This year has not been very easy. However, the professors have been willing to work with me and I appreciate their patience and flexibility."

"Yes, I'd heard about your ordeal with an ex-boyfriend? How are you feeling?"

"I'm good. Better now, actually. I've been working with a therapist for the emotional fall out and my physical wounds are pretty much healed," I said with a small smile. "I also have Edward who helped a lot."

"You're dating?"

"Engaged," Edward said with a proud smile, caressing my cheek. "We're getting married in August."

"That's wonderful," President Volturi beamed. "I wish both of you all the best."

"Thank you, sir," I said. We finished our tea and carried on some polite conversation. President Volturi apologized again for our situation before having us leave. He informed us that if we needed anything to talk to him at any time. We gathered our things and headed out of his office. President Volturi shook both of our hands and we left Old Main.



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After dinner, Jasper and Emmett came over for a brief rehearsal for Breaking Midnight. We were performing on Wednesday and Saturday for Eclipse. It was a glorified jam session, but we got a lot accomplished. We decided on the songs we wanted to sing and also discussed the possibility of getting some merchandise for our fans. Jasper had researched silk screening companies and got a few quotes. Alice drew up a new logo for us and we decided on the cheapest company, ordering 50 shirts, 10 in each size and 50 hoodies. We decided to stick with black shirts and hoodies, with silver and red lettering. Jasper said he'd drop off the logo, along with our order on Tuesday. He asked me to go with him to pay for the order with our Breaking Midnight checking account. I smiled and said yes. Edward told me to take the Volvo when we went.

The rest of the week was low key. We had a few papers due, but nothing too challenging on the school front. Our show at Eclipse on Wednesday went very well. It wasn't as crowded as it usually was on the weekend, but it was a decent sized group. After our show, Kellan had us keep our stuff in the storage closet at Eclipse, since we were playing there on Saturday. The busboys helped us moved the equipment into the storeroom.

On Thursday, Edward headed to his old high school to finish his observation hours. Garrett was a bit befuddled with the new baby and asked Edward to come in one day to complete the rest of his hours. After Aural Harmony, Edward drove off to his high school and I went to classes like normal. It wasn't the same without him, but he needed to do his job. He made it back to Emerson Express, just barely. Felix was still worried about Demetri. He was out of the hospital, but still recovering from getting his appendix out. It unfortunately burst and had to have quite invasive surgery. We all had signed a card for Demetri, wishing him a quick recovery. Felix apologized to Edward and I for flaking out on our rehearsal. We understood and said it was no big deal. Felix asked Rose to choreograph our dance for us, using "Fever" as our song. He said to use Michael Buble's version to choreograph as that was what he was basing his arrangement off of. Rose promised to have something completed by next week.

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Before we knew it, it was Friday. We had a test in theory and a project that was due. The test was on transposition. We were working on a 24 piece score for the orchestration part of theory and we needed to know how to transpose for each of the different instruments. The project was our 'theme' for the orchestration part. In psychology, we received our tests back and as I predicted, Edward and I aced it. Hafenrichter was surprised. We were the only ones who had gotten As on the test. We shrugged it off and readied ourselves for the marathon note-taking session that was educational psychology. In biology, I had a test, after I turned in my lab report from Monday. I was one of the last students completing the test and I was getting flustered. I managed to finish it and walk out with Alice to University Singers. Rehearsal was short as Eleazar had to go to a conference to make a presentation.

At the end of rehearsal, Alice linked arms with me as did Rose. "We're stealing your fiancée, Edward."

He pouted, "Why?"

"Hair cut, beautification, the whole she-bang," Alice said with a wink.

"Remember you have your pictures tomorrow. Get your hair cut, Edward. You're starting to look like Justin Bieber with the damn hair."

"It's not *that* long, Mary Alice," Edward snorted.

Alice unlinked her arm with mine and walked up to her brother. He towered over her 4'11" frame. She poked his chest. "Get. Your. Hair. Cut."

He rolled his eyes and ruffled her hair. She smacked him and danced away. She pulled on my arm and dragged me down the stairs to her car. I groaned inwardly as I didn't want to drive with her. She was a freaking maniac. Rose patted my arm and slid into the backseat. Edward stood on the sidewalk, watching us sadly as we pulled away. My phone chirped from my bag.

*Alice is evil - E*

*And your just NOW realizing this? You lived with her for how many years? - B*

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*Shut it, Swan. Go get beautiful, not that you need any help :) - E*

*Cheese - B*

*Gouda, baby :P - E*

*Oh lord, \*rolls eyes\* - B*

*Love you, Bella - E*

*Love you, too, Edward - B*

Alice sped to the salon and slammed her car into a parking spot. I thought my heart was going to jump out of my chest with her crazy driving. Rose and I looked at her and she smiled sweetly. She jumped out of the car and skipped to the entrance to the salon. I got out of the car and fell to my knees, kissing the ground. Rose got out of the car and guffawed. Alice was scowling at the door of the salon. "You're so funny, Bella. I'm not that bad."

I got up and looked at Rose. She smirked as we both said, "Yes, you are."

"Fine, you're both walking home," Alice huffed. We both chuckled and entered the salon. I was immediately ushered back to a shampoo chair and had my hair scoured. I was walked to a chair and Alice told the stylist how she wanted my hair cut. I glared at her and she smiled as she continued talking to the stylist. Alice danced away and the stylist began trimming my hair. She worked for an hour on my hair, cutting and straightening it. I got up and slipped her a tip. She thanked me and I walked to pay for my haircut. Alice ran her credit card and managed to pay for my haircut and again I scowled at her. "Clothes are next, Bella. You and Edward need to look like a couple, but not too matchy-matchy."

Alice drove us to the mall and led me into Nordstrom. Rose followed close behind. We found a pretty dress that was similar in color to the bridesmaid dresses that we had picked out. It was a wrap dress with 3/4 sleeves. Alice also picked out some dangly earrings that matched the dress. She told me to wear my crest tomorrow. We then moved to the men's section and picked out a dress

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shirt and tie for Edward that coordinated with my dress. We ended up with a pale lavender shirt and a tie with purple, gray, and white accents. We also got him a pair of dark jeans to wear. Using the debit card that Edward gave me, I paid for the dress and Edward's close, much to Alice's chagrin. Rose had disappeared as we were 'dressing' Edward. She returned with a pair of shoes for me. They were a pair of slate gray stiletto heels that had a peep toe. They were cute.

We headed to Rob's Garage for dinner after our shopping excursion. We were sat immediately and ordered our food and drinks. As we waited for our food to arrive, they both got devious smirks on their faces and I feared for my life.

"So, Bella, seeing as we are your maids of honor, we are in charge of planning the bachelorette party," Rose began.

*Fuck my life.*

"Okay?" I squeaked.

"What do you want for it?" Rose asked.

"Um, nothing?"

"Seriously, Bella? Nothing? You need to have a proper bachelorette party," Alice admonished.

"No strippers. That's all I ask," I relented. "I'll do anything else, but no strippers. The only naked man I ever want to see is Edward."

"Okay, fair enough. So we have free reign over the rest?" Alice asked.

"Pending my approval?" I compromised.

"Ugh, fine," Alice said, rolling her eyes.

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I smiled at how easily I won that. I sipped my diet coke and nibbled on the bread that was set out on our table. Our food was brought out and we spent the rest of dinner discussing wedding plans. Rose asked a few questions about Emmett during dinner. She said that he was acting weird around her. She was wondering if he had said anything to me. I shook my head no. Rose frowned and she started freaking out that Emmett was going to break up with her. I tried to assuage her thoughts as I knew that was the farthest thing from his mind. I didn't want to spill the beans that he was thinking about proposing. That was his job to do.

We settled our bill and headed back to my apartment. I texted Edward and he said that Emmett and Jasper were over. We headed upstairs and found the guys watching some television, Chinese takeout on the coffee table. Edward was cleaning it up as we walked in. Emmett said he picked up a movie and after the food was cleaned up and put away, we put the movie into the DVD player. I put the clothes that I had bought for us for the engagement pictures in our closet. I settled next to Edward and we watched *The Hangover*. Edward idly scratched my back as we watched the movie. I laid my head on his lap. His gentle touch soothed me and I found myself drifting off to sleep. I vaguely remember being picked up and moved to the bedroom after everyone left. I woke up about three in the morning, curled up against Edward's muscular chest, wearing my bra and underwear. I shivered and padded to the closet to put on some pajamas before removing my contacts and going to the bathroom. I walked back to bed and nestled back into Edward's arms, kissing his heart.

xx LC xx

I woke up the next morning to Edward staring at me. I cracked open an eye, "You know it's rude to stare, Edward Anthony," I teased, my voice rough with sleep.

"You were carrying on quite a conversation with yourself, Bella," he chuckled.

"Oh, God," I groaned. "What did I say?"

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"I only caught the tail end of your sleep conversation, but I think you smoked some good weed because you were quite descriptive of a purple polka-dotted elephant in a lime green tutu," Edward chuckled.

"I have never smoked pot, Edward," I chastised, smacking his chest.

"Your trippy dreams say otherwise," Edward chuckled.

"You are weird, Edward. I have never had any kind of recreational drug of any kind. Just say no and all that," I said as I rolled my eyes.

"Me too, baby. However, your sleep mumblings were quite humorous," he said as he kissed my nose. "You got dressed."

"I was cold. I got up around three to put on some clothes. Someone, when he put me to bed, just stripped me down to my underwear," I giggled.

"If I had my way, you would have been naked," Edward purred. He nibbled along my jaw. "However, you were out like a light. It took all of my energies to get you out of your clothes."

"I guess I was really tired," I mumbled. "I'm going to shower. Alice said she'd be here around ten to make us pretty for our pictures."

"Bella, you already are beautiful," he smiled.

"Cheese boy, stop it," I blushed. "I'm going to shower. You are NOT welcome to join me. Eat some breakfast."

"Yes, dear," he teased.

"Do you want get some before our wedding?" I threatened.

"Do you need to ask?" he countered.

"Then don't 'yes, dear' me," I giggled.

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"Yes, dear," he said as he smacked my ass. I threw a pillow at his head and stuck his tongue out at me.

I dragged my ass out of bed and hopped into the shower, quickly washing my body. I decided to wash my hair as I didn't like how the stylist did my hair. It was too straight. I decided to curl it using the curling iron with big loopy curls. It would go better with the dress. I blew dry my hair and popped in my contacts. They were really dry and didn't want to go in. I needed to wear them, though. I didn't want to be blind as a bat as we got our pictures taken. I got out of the shower and Edward was watching television in our bedroom, eating a pop tart on the bed. I walked to the dresser and pulled out a pair of simple gray panties and matching bra. Edward finished his breakfast and went to shower, after kissing me. I put on a pair of yoga pants and a t-shirt and worked on Edward's song. I wanted to finish it before the end of the school year and record it for him, using the recording studio in Brandon. It was going to be part of his wedding present. I took out my flash drive and added a few more measures as he showered.

I heard the intercom buzz and I walked to check who it was. "Hello?"

"What up, bitch?" Alice said.

"Hello, Alice. I'll buzz you in," I chuckled. I pressed the button and propped the door open. Alice waltzed with her arms full of beauty supplies and a bag of bagels. She put the bagels on the kitchen table and the cream cheese into the fridge.

"You washed your hair," Alice frowned.

"She made it too straight yesterday," I explained. "I wanted some more volume."

Alice ran her fingers through my curled hair and gave an approving nod. "I'll add a few more curls and you'll be all set. Where's Edward?"

"He's in the shower or shaving, I think," I answered.

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"Okay, Swan. Sit," she giggled. I plopped down in one of the kitchen chairs. Alice rubbed my face with some moisturizer after she pulled my hair off my face. She applied my make up with an expert touch, enhancing what I already had. As she was putting finishing touches on my face, Edward waltzed out in a pair of workout pants and no shirt.

*He's so perfect. An Adonis. Damn him and his six pack.*

"Thank you for getting your hair cut, Edward," Alice chirped. "No more Bieber."

"I didn't get it cut for you, Mary Alice. I got it cut for the beautiful woman you are putting make up on," Edward said as he grabbed a bagel. "I don't want to look shaggy in our engagement photos. I even shaved using the actual razor. Feel. Smooth as a baby's butt."

Alice ran her hand on Edward's cheek and smiled. "Like marble, Edward. Good job. You even used the moisturizer I gave you."

"I hate that crap, but I want to look good," Edward grumbled.

"Why do you hate it?"

"I just don't like the feel of it, Alice. Makes my face feel all greasy," Edward explained.

"Okay, Bella. You're not done, but I want to attack Edward's head before his hair dries too much," Alice commanded. I got up and waved Edward to sit down. He rolled his eyes and plopped down in the chair I just vacated. "Do you have any stuff for your hair, Edward?"

I held up one finger and darted to get the pomade that I liked so much. I handed it to Alice and she grinned. She ran some of it over her palms and she finger styled Edward's hair, making it look all piecey. After a few minutes of her fussing over Edward's head, she sent him to get dressed. I explained what he was supposed to wear. He nodded and dashed into the bedroom. Alice finished



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with my makeup and then moved onto my hair. She added some more curls and twisted it up. She proclaimed me done and I went to get dressed.

Edward sauntered out of the bedroom in the outfit that I had bought him. He looked delicious. His green eyes were sparkling and his pale skin looked like it was glowing. "Holy crow," I breathed.

He looked up at me and gave me a lopsided grin. "I take it you like it?" he asked.

"I more than like it, Edward. You look fucking hot," I murmured.

"Isabella Marie! Go get dressed!" Alice bossed from the kitchen. I growled and went into the bedroom. I put on some lotion on my legs and arms. I eased the dress over my shoulders and put on my jewelry. I had gotten my engagement ring cleaned yesterday at the jewelry store where Edward had gotten my promise ring. Lisette, the salesgirl who sold him the promise ring, gushed over the engagement ring. I was all blinged out and I slipped on my heels. I walked out to the living room, where Edward and Alice were sitting. Edward's eyes bugged out and his jaw dropped.

"You're catching flies, Cullen," I teased, cocking a hip.

He stood up and gestured for me to turn around. When I completed my turn, he pulled me tightly to his chest. "I can't believe you're *mine*," he growled.

"Only yours, Edward," I whispered. I leaned up and brushed my lips against his.

"Okay, fuck bunnies, you can go at it later. We need to drive to the botanic gardens and meet your photographer," Alice said.

Edward let me go, hesitantly and got our jackets. He held out my black leather jacket and I pushed my arms through the sleeves. Edward grabbed a gray jacket from the closet and eased it over his shoulders. Alice had on her black mini-trench coat and was holding her car keys. I grabbed Edward's arm and

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pleaded with my eyes for her not to drive. "Alice, I'm driving," Edward said.

"Oh, come on, Edward," Alice whined.

"I'm too big to fit in the backseat of your car and Bella still is not comfortable sitting in the backseat," Edward said confidently. It was true. I refused to sit in the backseat of any car since my accident.

"Ugh, fine!" Alice griped. Edward grabbed his wallet, phone and car keys. I slipped on my purse and we headed down to the parking garage. Alice gave him the address and he plugged it into the GPS. About forty-five minutes later, we arrived at the botanic gardens. A tall man, dressed in all black, was standing in front of the building. After Edward parked the car, Alice jumped out of the car and ran into the man's arms. Edward arched a brow and I sighed. She was talking animatedly to the man in black as we walked up to them. "Edward Cullen, Isabella Swan, this is your photographer Leonardo DiNolfi."

"Nice to meet you, Leonardo," Edward said politely.

"Call me Leo. Nice to meet both of you as well," he said with a wide grin. Over his shoulder was a huge bag filled with cameras and lenses. "Alice asked me to do your engagement photos."

"How do you know my sister?" Edward asked, acting like a big brother.

"Leo and I were paired up for a project last semester in business. He showed me his portfolio and he takes beautiful photos," Alice gushed.

"Here's a sampling," Leo said as he handed me a small book. Edward looked over my shoulder as I flipped through the pictures. They were beautiful and very artistic. "Are you ready?"

Edward and I nodded and we headed into the botanic garden green house. Alice had already arranged for us to use it and rented it for a couple of hours. Leo had already set up some lights and it looked very romantic. We took off our coats and Leo set us up in the position he wanted us in. We took the

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traditional engagement photos first. We then moved to some more artistic ones. Leo was very easy to work with. He made us both feel at ease.

We spent the full two hours taking photos in various locations in the green house. I think my favorite photo was the one where Edward had his arms wrapped around me and we both were cuddled with each other, lost in our own thoughts. His chin was resting on my shoulder and our foreheads touching, staring into each other's eyes. Leo said that he would edit the photos and set up a website for us to get our photos. Edward paid him with a check for half of the amount. Leo said he would take the other half after he completed the editing and he gave us the DVD with our photos. We asked for the traditional photos to be done first as we both wanted them to be run in our local papers, announcing our engagement. Leo said he'd send it to our email, free of charge.

Alice rode back with us to the apartment and then darted off to her dorm to get ready for tonight. She and Rose were going to be at Eclipse for our gig this evening. Edward and I headed up to our apartment. We changed for the show, after some sexytime fun. As I got ready, I was finally content in my life. I had wonderful friends. I had a wonderful family. I had a wonderful fiancé. Things could not get any better and for the first time, I was truly happy.

**A/N: What do you think?**

**Also, I'm thinking of starting a new story. In my head, this is what's floating around: Bella is a newly formed witch (has the ability to freeze time, blow things up and move things with her mind). She doesn't know this until her ex-boyfriend, James, who happens to be a demon, attacks her. Edward sees the attack and assists Bella and hones her witch powers. It's probably going to be a cross of *Charmed* and *Twilight*, kind of, sort of. Yay or nay? There will be lemons and drama and action and TinkerAlice and a gay Jacob. I'm in the planning stages and I want your valuable opinions!**

# Choir Tour

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 75: Choir Tour

### EPOV

I can't believe how quickly this semester is going. I mean seriously. It's insane how fast things are moving. It seems like yesterday, I proposed to Bella and now we are just past midterm. I couldn't believe that we had taken our engagement photos, though I was ready to kill my sister. I love her to pieces. Really, I do. However, it's our fucking wedding. She needs to back off. On Sunday, Bella and I discussed our concerns about Alice and decided to talk with her on Monday after University Singers.

Also, on Sunday, Bella was in a funk. She was a bit crabby and snippy. I received the brunt of her sour mood and I didn't understand why. I figured I'd let her be for a little bit and I ran some errands. I picked up some food from the grocery store and also got some flowers for my beautiful girl.

When I got back from the store, I found Bella curled up on the couch, with her sociology book on her lap. Her face was serene as she napped and I smiled at her beauty. Bella was one of the most beautiful women I'd ever met. She insisted that she was a 'plain jane' but I disagreed. She had a small, heart-shaped face that was surrounded by the softest mahogany hair. Her lips were full and pouty. Perfect for me to kiss and I did so as often as I could. Bella's eyes were the most beautiful shade of deep chocolate brown, with golden flecks close to the pupils. Her skin was so clear, it was almost translucent except for when she blushed, which was quite frequently. She was the perfect height for me, fitting under my chin. Bella had a petite frame,

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appearing to be very fragile. She had tiny wrists and ankles, very delicate. She also had an hourglass shape, the right proportions with her body size.

As I stared at her beauty, she moaned and rolled over on the couch. The book fell from her lap and bounced onto the floor. The soft thud startled her and her eyes flew open. She quickly sat up, disoriented. "What happened?"

"Your book fell," I said as I crouched down to pick up the sociology book. "Are you okay, Bella?"

"I guess," she mumbled as she reached for the text.

I picked up her feet and sat down, staring her in the eyes. "What's up, Bella? You seem a bit frazzled. You're snapping at me and now you are uncertain about something. Talk to me, beautiful."

"Bad day, Edward. I'm sorry I'm being such a bitch," she murmured. "I'm PMSing too. Blech."

"Why is it a bad day, Bella?" I pressed.

"I had a rough night sleeping last night. I had a few nightmares about Jacob and they were really unsettling," she explained.

"Jacob is gone, Bella," I said, reaching for her hand. "He can't hurt you anymore."

"I know. Believe me, I know," she said, entwining her fingers with mine.

"However, my subconscious thinks otherwise. I don't know why I had such unsettling nightmares last night, but they really got to me."

"Do you want to talk about them?" I asked.

"They pretty much replay what happened with Jacob in the car, except neither one of us survived. Or he got me and...and..." she sniffled.

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"You don't have to say it, Bella. I know," I muttered. "Have you talked to Dr. Lunes about these nightmares?"

"No. This is the first time since I've started seeing her that I'd had them," Bella said, looking at me with a sad expression on her face. "I thought I was over them."

"When's your next appointment with her?" I asked.

"Tomorrow at three."

"Mention them to her. Perhaps she has some strategies that you can use if you get another disquieting nightmare. I hate seeing you so upset, baby," I said, caressing her soft cheek.

"I'm sorry, Edward. Please don't be upset with me for being so horrendous toward you today," Bella said sheepishly.

"It's already forgotten. I've had my share of bad days and you've been nothing but supportive," I answered. "I did get you something at the store, though."

"Edward," she warned.

"Flowers, Bella. I got you flowers," I chuckled. I got up and got the bouquet of roses and gave them to her. She smiled and inhaled deeply.

"Thank you, Edward. This is very thoughtful," she whispered. Bella got up and put the roses into a vase. Afterward, she gave me a sweet, loving kiss and tight embrace. "I love you, handsome."

"I love you, too, Bella," I said as I wrapped my arms around her tiny body, kissing her hair.

I made dinner for us on Sunday. I decided to be adventurous and try to make quesadillas. I was actually proud of my dinner. The quesadillas were good, a bit burnt, but edible. I also made some Spanish rice and a salad. Bella was very

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appreciative of my efforts and thanked me in the shower that evening. The things she can do with her tongue just fucking amaze me. Damn. I wanted to reciprocate, but Bella was not feeling up to it. I scoffed and she ensured me that we would make up for it next week.

*Next week? Oh, right. Aunt Flo. Damn her.*

xx LC xx

Bella and I went to classes on Monday. We were both dreading dealing with Alice after University Singers. Once she sets her mind on something, it's nearly impossible to change it. We came up with several ideas last night over dinner and hopefully they would pan out. If not, I may be killing my little sister with Bella as an accomplice. Do they allow conjugal visits in jail between inmates? HmMMM? I wonder.

After University Singers, Bella and I pulled Alice into my practice room in Brandon. She frowned and gave us both a glare that could scare the skin off of a cat. I pulled on her hand and sat her down in the leather chair in the corner of my room. She continued to glare at the both of us as we sat down on the piano bench. "What?"

"Alice, we want preface this that we both love you very much," Bella said diplomatically.

"I love you, too," Alice said with a smile. "But...?"

"But, you're driving us crazy with all of the incessant wedding intrusion," I blurted out.

"Don't you want my help?" Alice pouted.

"Your *help*. Not your wedding. You'll get your own dream wedding when you get married," Bella explained. "This is supposed to be our wedding and it's turning into the 'Alice Wedding Extravaganza' with no chandeliers."

"Oh," Alice said quietly.

"Pixie, you have done so much. However, this is something that we need to do. When we want your help, we'll ask for it," I said as I crouched in front of her. "Please?"

Alice's blue eyes met mine and she gave me a sad smile. "I get it, Edward. I'm sorry about being so pushy. I just want your special day to be, well, *special*."

"And it will be. However, we don't need elephants and fireworks to do it," I chuckled.

"I guess I better cancel the pyrotechnician, then," Alice giggled.

"Would be a safe bet, Ali," Bella snickered.

"I understand, you guys. However, if you ever, and I mean *EVER*, need help. Call me, okay?" Alice said with a smirk.

"You're number one on the speed dial," I answered. I stood up and Alice jumped into my arms, wrapping her legs around me. Bella giggled from the piano bench at Alice's exuberance.

Alice hopped down and ruffled my hair. "I'm sorry about being so overbearing. I promise I'll behave. Scouts honor and all that shit. Anyhow, I'm going to head back to Rathburn. I need to pack for our trip to Buffalo. Yay," Alice said with a roll of the eyes.

"Alice, we leave on *Thursday*," Bella snorted.

"I know. I don't know when I'm going to pack all of my stuff. I need to start now if I'm going to be ready," Alice said with a dismissive wave of the hand. "Speaking of which, we're rooming together. You, me, and Rose. I have a garment bag to keep our dresses. All you need to pack is your suitcase."

"Cool. Thanks, Alice," Bella said with a smile.



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Alice gave both Bella and I kiss on the cheek and darted out of the practice room. Bella grumbled and headed up to her own practice room to work on her piano pieces. I also needed to rehearse. I'd been slacking and was preparing for my recital at the end of May. I practiced until about 2:30 and got Bella from her room.

We drove to her appointment and I waited in the reception area. Unlike the last few times, I was not called into her appointment with Dr. Lunes and I was okay with that. She needed to work on healing on her own terms. Afterward, Bella and I headed back to the apartment and studied for a music literature exam and a sociology exam.

*Ahhhh, the mundane necessities of being a university student.*

xx LC xx

The week flew by. Before we knew it, Bella and I were packing our bags for our trip to Buffalo. She never ceased to amaze me. She was organized and level-headed. Her bags were packed in a matter of a half hour. I was still packing, nearly three hours later. However, the ironing I needed to do, erm, rather Bella did, hindered the expediency of my packing.

We were leaving from Brandon Hall on Thursday morning, after Eleazar's music literature class. We were taking two huge coach buses and driving on our tour. It was decided the underclassmen would be in one bus and the upperclassmen in the other. For the first night, we were staying with host families at the church we were singing at. I was rooming with Jasper and Tyler. The second and third night were at a hotel and the final night was with another set of host families.

We loaded up the Volvo and drove to Brandon. Eleazar had told the commuters to park in the employee lot. We gave him our license plate number and he notified campus security of the extra cars in the lot. I parked the car and we headed to the front of Brandon to the large buses. Bella had both of our messenger bags and I carried the luggage. We managed to put all the necessary things into two small carry ons. Alice, on the other hand, had a huge full-sized

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suitcase. The choir members in charge of the luggage were giving Alice the evil eye. She was happily oblivious in Jasper's arms.

"Hi, guys!" she chirped.

"Hey, Pixie. How are you doing?" I asked as we approached the bus. The luggage monkeys gathered our bags and put them into the bus. Bella came up and laced her fingers with mine, leaning her head against my shoulder. She was getting over a minor cold and still wasn't feeling a 100%.

"I'm good. How about you two?" Alice asked.

"I'm fine," I said. "Bella's getting over a cold."

"I hate being sick," she grumbled. She sniffled dramatically and sighed.

"I'm sorry, Bella," Jasper said sympathetically.

"At least you'll have an hour and half or so to sleep on the bus," Alice added.

"Actually, it's going to be two and a half. We're going to a suburb outside Rochester first," I explained. "Eleazar gave the section leaders a more detailed itinerary."

"Oh, cool," Jasper said with a smooth smile.

Eleazar came out and told us to get onto the bus with our luggage. Rose and Emmett were saying good bye to each other as we were talking. We all clambered onto the bus and took a group of seats in the back. As soon as we got settled, Bella laid her head against my chest and conked out. She didn't really sleep the night before because of her sniffles. Jasper and Alice sat across the row from us and Rosalie sat with Tia in the seat in front of Alice and Jasper. I reached for my iPod, without disturbing Bella and took out my psychology book. She was not moving and I was okay with that. I placed the ear buds in and began reading as we pulled away. Bella eventually moved down my chest and settled her head in my lap, curling up into a little ball. I was

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in shock that she could contort herself to fit in such a tiny space. I ran my fingers through her silky hair and she hummed against my thigh.

About an hour into our ride, we pulled off and stopped at McDonald's for some lunch. I gently roused Bella and she looked at me with a bleary look in her eyes. I felt her forehead and she had a slight fever. "Baby, are you okay?" I asked.

"Not really," she mumbled. "I thought I was getting over this thing, but I'm feeling worse."

I looked around and saw we were across the street from a CVS. "I'm going to get you some medication, okay?"

She nodded and laid back down on the chair that I vacated. I got off the bus and found Alice, telling her about Bella. I slipped her some money and asked her to get us both some food. Alice gave me a hug, telling me that she would take care of it. I found Eleazar and informed him that I was running to the pharmacy across the way to get some medication for Bella. Jasper decided to come with me. We entered the store and I went to the cold medicine aisle and picked up several different varieties of medication. I also picked up some cough drops and several boxes of Kleenex.

After we paid for our necessities, Jasper walked into McDonald's and I went back onto the bus. I found Bella in the same position I had left her. I took out the thermometer I purchased and stuck it in her ear. She was running a mild temperature of 101.2. I frowned and brushed her hair off her face.

"Bella, baby, sit up," I coaxed. She moaned and sat up. Her eyes were slightly red. I reached into her bag and gave her contact lens case. She rolled her eyes, but removed them without talking. I handed her glasses and she slipped them on. "Alice is getting us food. Is there anything you want?"

"Shamrock Shake," she croaked with a timid grin. I smiled and texted Alice for Bella's request. About a half hour later, Alice and Jasper came in with our food. I inhaled my double quarterpounder with cheese. Bella nibbled at her

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hamburger and we shared some fries. "Did you get some medicine for me?"

"Yeah. Here's some daytime cold and flu stuff," I said, reaching into the bag. She popped the pills out and sipped her shake to swallow them. I grabbed our garbage and tossed it into the trashcan outside the bus. The bus driver had returned and he gave me a smile. I went back to Bella and slid in next to her. She settled against my shoulder, shivering slightly. I moved and gave her my jacket to use as a blanket. She gladly accepted and quickly drifted off to sleep again.

After another two hours, we pulled up to a very sleek looking church. Bella slept the entire time. My arms actually had fallen asleep, but I didn't want to let go of her. She looked so tired and fragile. Carmen, who was riding on our bus, told us to gather our things and follow her into the sanctuary. I woke Bella up and she gave me a sleepy smile. She put her arms through my jacket and wrapped it snugly around her body. I took her temperature before we left and it was still about the same.

We entered the church and Eleazar was speaking with the pastor. We all sat down in the pews of the church. Bella was still a little bleary eyed and she leaned against me. Alice, Jasper and Rose sat in front of us, chatting animatedly about something they saw on television last night. After a few moments, Eleazar shook the pastor's hand and gestured to us. In his quiet way, he asked us to stand on the altar, roughly in the same locations that we stand in rehearsal. We rehearsed our pieces in the new location and made some minor adjustments to our performance. We were singing the 'non-holiday' music from the Christmas concert. I spoke with Eleazar about Bella and he told me that I was going to conduct River in Judea. I panicked, but quickly recovered.

We loaded the bus and headed to a Golden Corral. Tyler and Ben finally would have their endless debate decided upon. During our trip to Toronto, they had a deep philosophical discussion over what was better: Old Country Buffet or Golden Corral. Bella couldn't tell them honestly as she never had been to a Golden Corral. Now, she can. If she can taste the food. We ate our dinner and Bella finally gave her vote: Old Country Buffet was better. There was cheers and groans all around, but everyone was in good spirits. Bella was also feeling

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a little better. She spoke with Eleazar and said that she could conduct River in Judea. I was secretly happy as I wasn't prepared to conduct it. I know what she does with the music, but it was her piece. I also had the solo and I didn't want to just arbitrarily reassign it to another tenor.

We headed back to the church and went into separate rooms. The girls were changing into their dresses and we had to put on our tuxedos. I slipped on my tuxedo pants and t-shirt. I reapplied some deodorant and put on some light cologne. It was one of my biggest pet peeves when guys 'showered' in their cologne before a concert. When you're standing on the stage, especially in one spot, you tend to sweat. The 'bath' of cologne is only intensified with the body heat and it makes some people (me) nauseous. I put on my shirt and tie, grabbing my tuxedo jacket before getting something to drink. As I was walking back to the changing room, I heard some bustling in the woman's changing area. Alice ran out frantically. She spotted me and grabbed my hand.

"Alice, what's wrong?" I asked, my heart beating erratically.

"Bella passed out," she said.

"What?" I croaked. We ran into the changing room and we found Bella laying on the floor, Carmen hovering over her. I fell to my knees and felt her forehead. She was burning up.

"She was getting dressed and she just keeled over," Carmen said quietly.

"Alice, in my bag, there's a thermometer and grab a bottle of water," I said, calmly as I could. Alice and Rose darted to the men's changing room, returning a few moments later with my bag. I rummaged through it and took out the thermometer. Bella's fever had spiked and it was nearly 103 degrees. Alice returned with a small towel with cold water on it. I pressed the towel to forehead. I gently cradled her to my chest, whispering in her ear, "Bella, wake up beautiful. Please."

Eleazar came in and his face was etched with concern. He crouched down and ran his hand across her forehead. "She's burning up."

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I nodded and showed him the thermometer. The pastor came in with a small container of smelling salts. He waved it under Bella's nose and she stirred. Her eyes blinked open and she wasn't focused on anything. I gently caressed her hot cheek. "What happened? What are you doing in here, Edward? You can't be in here. It's the woman's changing room."

"Bella, you passed out," I said weakly.

She blinked and frowned. "Oh. I'm fine now. Can you help me up?" she asked.

Jasper had come into the room and held out his hands for her to help her up. She grasped them and stood up, swaying on her feet. Jasper ensnared her waist before she fell again. "Easy, darlin'."

"Bella, I'm really concerned," Eleazar said as Jasper and he led her to a chair. "You're running a fever and you passed out. Your health needs to come first."

"I'm fine, really," she said feebly. Alice handed her some water and she sipped it tentatively. She stood up and fell, immediately, back into the chair. "Okay, maybe not."

"I think it would be best for you to head back to campus," Eleazar said with a sad smile.

"How? We took a bus," Bella grumbled.

"I've called a local rental car company when I heard you collapsed. Edward and you are going to drive home as soon as the company delivers the car," Eleazar said as he gently patted her hand. "We don't want you getting any sicker, to the point of hospitalization. As I said before, your health is most important."

"Come on, Bella. Let's get you changed back into your regular clothes," Alice said. She and Rosalie flanked her sides and led her to the bathroom. Rose carried her clothes.

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Eleazar nodded to me and we headed out into the hallway. "Go get changed, Edward. I know you won't want to be away from your fiancée. She's very sick and I know how protective you can be," he said with a sardonic grin.

"What about the performance?" I asked. "The two pieces that Bella and I conducted?"

"I can step in. I've already spoken with Austin and he's taking your solo," Eleazar said with a gentle pat on the shoulder. I nodded and went into the changing room. I put my jeans and button down back on. I put my tuxedo into my garment bag and waited outside of the woman's changing room. The bus driver had already pulled our suitcases out of the cargo hold and I was just waiting for the rental car. Alice and Rose all but carried Bella out of the changing room. Jasper grabbed our bags and I easily hefted Bella up into my arms. She pathetically said that she could walk, but didn't offer much of a fight as I carried to the front of the church. As we walked up, a small car pulled up to the church. A man with a rental car uniform hopped out and spoke with Eleazar. He handed him the keys and I settled Bella in the front seat of the car, buckling her.

The rental car attendant was not happy that a college student was going to be driving his rental car, but Eleazar emphasized that this was an emergency and the school will pay for any damage that was inflicted to the car, which would not happen. The rental car attendant slipped into another car that followed him with a co-worker and they drove off after Eleazar signed for the car. Jasper put the bags into the trunk and shook my hand. Alice and Rose both gave me a hug and told Bella to feel better. The pastor handed me a set of directions back to Emerson University and I thanked him. After double checking that we had everything, we pulled away from the church and drove the three hours back to Emerson.

**A/N: Okay, so don't hate me. I'm taking a brief vacation from *La Cantante*. I've been having a bit of writer's block with this story and I want to make sure that I give you the best story I can! I'm hoping to come back to it in a week or so. Up next will hopefully be some lemony fun (perhaps in a practice room?) and getting ready for Spring break. Reviews will make**

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**Bella feel better from her bout with a severely bad cold. No passing out :)  
Thanks for reading. Leave some love!**



# Sick

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*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 76: Sick

### BPOV

I don't remember how I got back in my bed. I cracked my eyes open and I was far too comfortable. I attempted to look around and I couldn't see a thing. It was dark. I could only see the faint glow from the clock. I felt around the bed and ended up smacking Edward in head.

"Ow," he mumbled. "I drove you home. I carried you upstairs. I changed you into your sick pajamas. I put you in our bed and you hit me?"

"Sorry, Edward," I croaked, feeling horrible.

"Bella, I'm teasing. You sound terrible," he said as he flipped on a light on the nightstand. The change was harsh and I ducked my head under the pillow. The sudden movement caused my stomach to turn. I groaned and Edward gently rubbed my back. "Can I get you anything?"

"A time machine to fast forward through this foulness?" I requested.

"I'm on it," Edward winked.

"How long have I been asleep?" I mumbled, acclimating my vision to the harshness of the light.

"You slept the entire drive home, stirring only when I picked up to carry you to

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the apartment. You fell into a deep sleep until you just now woke up. It's around four in the morning," Edward explained. He laid a cool hand on my forehead. "You still have a pretty high fever. Let me get the thermometer."

He hopped out of bed and got the thermometer, putting it into my ear. After a few seconds, it beeped and he frowned. "Bella, your fever is too high. It's gone up since we've been home. It's 104.5."

"I haven't taken anything. Can you get me some medicine?" I asked each word feeling like my throat was on fire.

Edward nodded and he reached over to the nightstand, handing me some flu medication and cough syrup. "If your fever doesn't break in two hours, I'm calling my dad," Edward said as he nibbled on his finger.

I nodded and took the medication that he gave me. I lay back down against the pillows, shivering slightly. Edward gathered me in his arms. I protested. I didn't want to get him sick. He said that he spent three hours with me drooling on his arm, he's already infected. I fell onto his bare, cool chest and I quickly fell back asleep. I faintly felt Edward move and he took my temperature. He clucked and got out of bed. I rolled over on my stomach and heard him on the phone. I was in a twilight state of sleeping and everything was fuzzy.

A few more hours later, I think, I felt another hand on my forehead. I poked my eyes open and I saw Carlisle kneeling in front of me. His face was lined with concern. "Hey, Bella," he said quietly. "I got a very frantic phone call from Edward this morning saying you were sick. What's wrong?"

"My throat hurts, head's pounding, body aching, great difficulty breathing," I whispered.

"Can you sit up for me?" Carlisle asked.

I nodded and weakly sat up on the bed. He breathed on his stethoscope and placed it under my pajama top. He instructed me to breathe deeply and I did the best that I could. He put his stethoscope around his neck and tapped on my

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chest. "When you get sick, you take no prisoners, Bella," he chuckled. "You have walking pneumonia. You're going to have to go on some antibiotics and take it easy for the next few weeks."

"No fair," I mumbled.

"What's not fair?" Carlisle asked as he smoothed my hair.

"I get the most severe case of strep the nurse at the health center has ever seen and Edward gets a minor cold. He gets the stomach flu and I get walking pneumonia? Can't I catch a break?"

"Edward has always had a tough immune system. Alice had mono when she was a sophomore and she was very sick. Edward had never had it and unfortunately, caught it. His case was far more mild than Alice's. She ended up missing a month of school and when she returned, she could only go back on alternating half days. Edward only missed a week and pretty much fell back into his original hectic routine," Carlisle said with a grin.

"I'm built like an ox," Edward said, pounding his chest. "What's the diagnosis?"

"Walking pneumonia," Carlisle said.

"What does that mean?" Edward asked.

"You have to spend the entire weekend in bed and you need to take it easy when you return to classes, if you have no fever, on Monday," Carlisle explained. "I'm going to write a prescription for amoxicillin and prescription expectorant. You are not contagious. However, I wouldn't be hugging everybody as your immune system will be a little out of sorts. Esme's in the kitchen making her famous home remedy chicken soup and I'm certain it has healing properties as well."

Carlisle took out his cell phone and called in my prescriptions to the pharmacy. He and Edward left go get them after I was settled back into bed with some fresh pajamas and after I had some breakfast. I was sleeping when they

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returned and Edward gently woke me to give me my first dose. I took it and fell back into a fitful slumber.

I spent the rest of the day in bed and was barely awake and coherent.

*And I tried to stay on choir tour? You are so brilliant, Swan. JEEZ!*

Edward took care of me, along with Carlisle and Esme. They ended up staying the night and leaving the following morning. During the night, my fever had broke somewhat and I was covered in sweat. I got up and padded to the bathroom to take a brief shower as I felt gross and nasty. It was seriously in and out with the shower. I didn't trust myself. I blew dry my hair and that woke Edward up. He gave me a stern look and I told him that I was a sweaty mess. He took the blow dryer from my hand and he finished drying my hair. He then carried me back to bed after I went to the bathroom and I fell back asleep, spent from my ten minute shower.

The rest of the weekend was spent in my pajamas, lounging on the couch or in bed. I was honestly bored out of my mind, but I was too weak to fight it. Edward stayed with me and tried to keep me entertained. He got a bunch of movies from Netflix and we spent the weekend watching those. Emmett came over on Saturday evening and he helped take care of me. I hated being waited on, but my sick ass was too feeble to do anything. After my fever broke on Saturday morning, I only had a low-grade fever for the rest of the weekend. However, Carlisle was insistent that I not go anywhere if I had a fever, even a low-grade one. It could cause a relapse of my pneumonia.

Edward insisted that we stay home on Monday. If we had gone on choir tour, we would have been out of classes anyway. I begrudgingly agreed and we spent Monday at home. I spent the day working on homework, moving ahead in my classes. Edward did the same and spent a good chunk of the day working on his final project for introduction to education.

On Tuesday, Edward went to classes and I stayed home. I still had a very low-grade fever. Mr. Overprotective was insistent that we followed Carlisle's directions. I rolled my eyes and sent emails to all my professors explaining my

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illness and my absence. I would have to make up an exam for sociology, but other than that, it was all good.

By Wednesday, I was able to go to classes. Thank goodness. I was getting fucking stir crazy. I was snapping at Edward and I know I was being a total bitch. We drove to campus in silence. The tension between us was palpable. I looked at Edward, his jaw was tense and his eyes were trained on the road.

"Edward?"

"Yeah?" he asked no emotion in his voice.

"I'm sorry," I said quietly. "I know I've been nasty and all of that was directed toward you. You've been nothing but patient and doting and I feel so horribly about how I've acted."

"Bella, you were mean to me. I know you were sick and frustrated. I get that. However, you can't just snap at me like you've been for the past two days," Edward said, his eyes flashing with anger.

I closed my eyes and I felt the tears build behind them. "I know, Edward. I'm so incredibly sorry for how I've acted. It was uncalled for. Please don't be mad at me," I sniffled, tears streaming down my face.

"I accept your apology, Bella. However, I'm still not happy," Edward said coldly.

He pulled into a parking spot and I darted out of the car, grabbing my bag at my feet. I ran into Brandon and locked myself into the bathroom, sobbing hysterically. I'd fucked up, royally. I took the one good thing in my life and turned him against me. I curled up into a ball in a stall in the bathroom, trying to calm myself. I heard the door open and some heels clicked on the floor.

"Is everything okay?" asked a female voice.

"I'm fine. Just having a bad day," I croaked.

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"Bella? It's Carmen," Carmen responded. I opened the door and exited my stall. "What's wrong, sweetie?"

"Just still feeling like crap," I answered.

"I'm assuming you're feeling a little better as you are at school," she said with a smile. I held up my fingers and indicated how much I felt. She laughed. "There's a very upset Edward pacing outside the bathroom. He looks like he's ready to tear his hair out."

"We had a fight," I mumbled.

"Let me guess. You were sick all weekend and he took care of you. As you got better, you snapped at him and you were arguing about that," Carmen guessed.

"Sounds about right," I answered. "I was horrendous toward him. I'm afraid I fu...screwed up."

"Based on his reaction outside the bathroom, it'll be fine. He actually asked me to come in here to check on you. He loves you very much."

"I know. I love him too," I said.

"I think my work here is done," Carmen smiled. "I'm going to send your frantic fiancé in here."

"Carmen, this is the women's room," I laughed.

"If you won't tell, I won't," she teased.

She winked and slipped out the door. She all but shoved Edward into the bathroom. He stood sheepishly near the doorway and looked down at his feet. "Bella? I'm sorry I made you cry."

"Edward, I should be the one apologizing. I was the hugest bitch in the history of time. You were so caring and I appreciate everything you did for me. I'm

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just over being sick, over the drama and it all hit me. I am so sorry for being nasty toward you," I said, tears spilling on my cheeks.

Edward looked up at me and his green eyes were sad behind his glasses. I walked toward him and he held open his arms. I melted against his chest and bit back tears. He wrapped his arms around me and held me tightly. I pressed a kiss to his chest, above the swan and squeezed around his waist. He kissed the crown of my head and heaved a sigh. "We got to go, beautiful. We're already late to theory."

I nodded against his chest and picked up my bag. Edward opened the door and we walked up to music theory. We took our seats, Larry giving us a disapproving stare, and retrieved our notes. Theory was a blur. I was still feeling so guilty about my treatment of Edward. I knew he was feeling bad for making me cry. When theory was concluded, Larry told us we were having an exam on Friday. Edward and I gathered our belongings and walked to psychology. We were still quiet and there was still tension between us but it was nowhere near as bad as in the car. We sat through Hafenrichter's lecture and took our notes. After psychology, we went our separate ways after a chaste kiss. Edward traced the curve my jaw before left, apologizing again. I gave him an understanding smile and walked to biology.

We were having our practical exam on the cat dissection lab today. I was not looking forward to this. I had missed a good chunk of the this lab when I was injured and I felt ill prepared. Alice gave her notes and it helped, but not as much as actually being there. I walked into the lab room and took out my pencil, standing next to Alice. She gave me a hug, asking me how I was feeling. I shrugged and waved my hand, indicating that I was feeling 'so-so.' The TA passed out the exams and instructed us to go to our lab table. We were given five minutes to answer the question or questions based on what we saw in the cat at each lab station. There were fifteen lab stations. We completed the practical and packed up our things. The class went a little longer than anticipated, but Eleazar had canceled rehearsal for University Singers for the rest of the week. Edward was waiting outside the lab.

"Hi, Edward," Alice chirped. "How are you doing, big brother?"

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"I'm good. Got a bit of headache," Edward grimaced. "How are you doing, Pixie?"

"I'm tired. We got in last night from tour and it was after midnight," Alice grumbled. "It was a lot of fun."

"I'm sure it was," Edward smiled.

"There's something up between the two of you," Alice said, looking at us speculatively.

"We had a fight this morning," I answered.

"Well, in that case, I'll let you both make up. I'm glad you're feeling better, Bella," Alice said as she gave me a hug. "You two will be fine. I have a..."

"Feeling," Edward and I responded, rolling our eyes.

"Love you both," Alice chirped and she skipped off to her dorm.

"Bye, Ali," I called out to her. She waved over her shoulder and turned the corner.

"How was your practical?" Edward asked as he laced his fingers with mine.

"I fucking bombed it," I grumbled. "Even though I missed a majority of the lab, I still am being held responsible for the information. Does that seem fair?"

"No, it doesn't. Have you spoken with the professor?" Edward asked.

"He was the one who was insistent that I take the practical," I grumbled. "He was your old advisor."

"Haddon? He's a prick," Edward sighed. "He is unwavering in his beliefs on absences. Bella, you shouldn't be held responsible for the information presented on the labs when you weren't there. You had a medical reason why



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you were absent and he should excuse you or provide an alternative assignment."

"That's what I said, but he said if I didn't complete the practical, I'll fail. Hell, I'm probably failing now," I said. "I get to look forward to summer school now."

"You should talk to Dr. Gianetti," Edward suggested as he opened my door for me.

"The Dean of Academic Integrity?"

"Yeah, there's obviously some issues with the integrity of Dr. Haddon," Edward said.

"Well, let me see how I did on the practical. If I bombed it, then I'll talk to Dr. Gianetti. If not, I'll deal."

"Bella, you are so stubborn," Edward grumbled.

"I hate confrontation, like someone else I know," I said, poking his side. He giggled and gave me a stern look. "You're definitely improving in your 'bitch brow.'"

He rolled his eyes and shook his head. "You are just too much, Bella. Let's go home."

I nodded and he pulled away from the curb and drove us back to our apartment. The air around us had settled down, but we still needed to talk. He parked the car into the garage and grabbed our bags. I pulled out my keys and we climbed into the elevator, heading up to the fourth floor. I unlocked the door and I pulled on Edward's hand to the couch. He put our bags on the arm chair and placed his coat over the top. I sat down and curled my legs underneath my body. Edward sat down facing me and we both started talking at the same time.

"I'm sorry," we both said.

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We both laughed and Edward gestured for me to go. "I really am sorry, Edward. I feel awful. Please say that you accept my apology for my bitchiness and crankiness while I was sick."

"Baby, I accept your apology. I know you were feeling horrible and I get that. I know I am not the most pleasant person to be around while I'm sick," Edward laughed.

"If you're sick," I teased.

"Like I said, I'm built like an ox," Edward retorted. "Just be aware of what you say. Your words have ramifications. I know your remarks were not directed at me personally, but they were still hurtful. However, I also want to apologize. I was a world class dick to you this morning. I should have approached it more delicately and been more understanding. Forgive me?" Edward asked, looking at me sheepishly.

"I love you, Edward," I said as I scrambled onto his lap. "Of course I forgive you."

"I love you more, Bella," Edward said as he cupped my jaw. He leaned forward and caressed my lips with his. He deepened the kiss and moved to straddle me onto his lap. I pulled away and shook my head no. "Why? That's the only good thing about fighting is the 'making up.'"

"Not when you're 'out of commission,'" I said. "Being as sick as I was, it fucked with my system. Give me a couple days and we can make up properly, after Carlisle gives me my shot."

"Damn it," Edward said, scrunching his nose. "Can we at least make out?"

"Like you need to ask?" I answered, kissing him forcefully.

**A/N: And we're back. At least I hope. I started working on another story and got my creative juices flowing. This was a bit of a filler chapter, explaining Bella's illness and such. Up next will be 'making up,' getting**

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**ready for spring break and the spring break itself (not all in one chapter...however, that's your sneak preview). Leave some love or hate!  
xoxox**

# Fluff

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## Chapter 77: Fluff

### EPOV

Bella got better. Thank goodness. I love her tremendously, but when was sick, man did she get sick. The only other person I saw look as bad as Bella did when she had pneumonia was my mom and that was right before she died. I was panicking when I saw her look so frail and tiny. That's when I decided to call Carlisle. He was understanding and he drove out for the house call. I was grateful his willingness to come out to help out with Bella. He said he'd do the same for any one of his children. Bella was included in that mix.

The weekend after Bella's illness, we drove up to my parents' home to visit them. Bella also wanted to get her shot. Carlisle was hesitant to do so. He made arrangements with a gynecologist friend so she could get an exam. Bella reluctantly agreed. On Saturday, Esme and Bella went to doctor while Carlisle and I lazed around the house. They returned a few hours later, laden with bags. After the doctor's appointment, Esme and Bella went shopping. Or rather, Esme went shopping and Bella watched. I asked Bella how she was the doctor said that she was as healthy as a horse down there. She got a new script for her shot and it was administered that morning. We ended up spending the night at my parents' home and I took Bella to a movie. Like previously, we didn't end up watching it. We just made out in the back row of the theater.

The rest of the weekend and the first part of the week were pretty dull. On Thursday, after sociology, Bella and I decided to go our respective practice rooms to work on our pieces from private lessons. We typically did that to kill

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time between sociology and Express. I was working on another piece for my beautiful girl when I heard a sharp rap on my door. I frowned and got up, opening the door. Bella was standing there and she was very frazzled. "Bella? What's wrong love?"

"I hate the piano," she said as she tore at her hair. "Ben gave me this insane piece for juries and I can't get it. You need like huge hands or an eleventh finger to play all the notes on the page."

"What are you playing?" I asked, sitting her down on the chair in my room. She held out a piece by Grieg. It was one of my favorites. I had played it when I was in high school. I opened the music and started playing through it. It was a challenge for me and my hands were huge. "Come here, Bella."

She got up and plopped down next to me. "I can't reach these chords. I can't get these rhythms and fuck me if I can't have it memorized."

"You're right these chords are beastly. They're hard for me and look at my hands," I said holding up my left hand. She put her left hand against mine and it was easily half the size. "You'll have to modify the chords so you can reach all of the notes or remove them. Let's work through this and you'll get it."

She pulled out her pencil from her bun and we spent an hour and half working through modifying the piece to fit her hands. We also worked out some difficult rhythms. We managed to get the first page and a half worked out. Bella was calmer, but still upset. "I hate this song."

"I happen to love it. I played it when I was younger. You'll get it, baby. I'm confident you can," I said caressing her cheek. Her eyes fluttered shut and she leaned into my hand. I traced the curve of her cheek and gently raised her chin. I leaned down and brushed my lips against hers. She sighed and her mouth opened slightly. I ran my tongue along her bottom lip before I gently pressed it into her warm mouth. My hands moved down her back and pulled her closer to me on the piano bench. Her fingers moved up my spine and finally settled in my hair, twisting the strands in her hands. "I want you, baby."

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"Edward, we can't," Bella said logically.

"Yes, we can," I pressed, moving my lips from her mouth. I licked along her jaw and eventually pulled her earlobe between my teeth, sucking lightly. "You just need to be quiet."

She moaned and pulled my face back to her lips. She greedily kissed my mouth and her fingers moved to my belt buckle. "If we get caught..." Bella threatened.

"We won't get caught," I promised. I pulled away and turned off the lights in the practice room. The only lighting in the room was the small window. I pulled the blinds shut in the door and quickly returned to my love. I knelt in front of her, crashing my lips against hers. She moaned and moved her hands back to my belt. She quickly unbuckled it and undid my jeans. I unzipped her fleece and pushed it from her shoulders. It fell to the floor and I moved to her jeans, unbuttoning them. I stood up, bringing Bella with me, and I tugged on her jeans. She did the same for me and we both stepped out of them. I moved Bella toward the wall, pinning her against it with my body. I brought her leg up around my hip and moved my fingers into her panties. She was so wet. I groaned and kissed her forcefully. I circled my fingers around her clit and she pulled away, sucking on my neck. Her hand moved into my boxers and she began stroking my straining erection. "Bella, I need to feel you. Please," I asked my voice straining.

She removed her hand and pulled my boxers down my legs. I divested her of her underwear. I picked her up and pinned her against the wall, her legs wrapping around my waist, gazing into her coffee colored eyes. Our gaze held as I eased my dick into her warm, wet core. She gasped and her head fell back against the wall. "Edward, you feel so good," she breathed.

"Look at me, love," I commanded. Her eyes met mine and I started moving in and out of her body. She mewled and whimpered as I moved slowly, relishing the connection we had. She moved forward and pulled my face toward hers. She kissed my lips, biting down on my bottom lip, causing me to yelp. She smiled and angled my head so she could attach her lips to my neck. She bit down and sucked on my neck, eliciting growls from me. Each lick, bite, and

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kiss made me harder. I began moving faster within her tight body. I could feel her own reaction to my increased speed. Her breath was erratic and her muscles were fluttering around my cock. She bit down harder and I knew she left a mark, but I couldn't care less. It took all of my control to not come right then. I pulled away and started pounding in her faster. She reached between us and began rubbing her clit and her moans were getting louder. I kissed her to quell the sounds she was making. When my lips met hers, her muscles clenched down around me and she let out a quiet scream against my mouth. I continued to drive into her until I felt my dick twitch and spill into her.

We slid down onto the floor, breathing heavily. Bella had her arms wrapped around my neck, resting her head on my shoulder. I felt her giggles and I moved her back. "What are you laughing at?"

"I drew blood, Edward," she snorted. "I'm sorry." She ran her fingers over where she bit me, pouting a bit.

"Don't be. I'm yours and you've marked me as such," I said reaching my hand up to my neck. It was tender, but knowing how I got it, I smiled. "I think you're the vampire though."

"Yeah, you go for the thigh. I'll bite down on the neck," she laughed, covering the mark with her mouth, licking it. I could feel my dick respond to her actions and he was very happy. "Round two?"

"As much as I want to, we probably shouldn't," I said. "Though, I am comfortable where I'm at." I wiggled my hips as she was on top of me. I was still buried in her pussy. My movements definitely got my dick's attention. "Fuck."

"Round two," Bella giggled. I nodded and crashed my lips against hers and she began moving on top of me. She rocked on my cock and it hardened instantly. "Do you like this, Edward? Making love in places where we could get caught?"

"I love everything about this, my love," I breathed against her mouth. "I love how you make me feel. I love how your body responds to my touch. I love

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everything about you." I snaked my arm around her waist and she began moving faster on my cock. "God, we're perfect together."

"Yes, Edward," she breathed as she rotated her hips. "It almost seems like you were made just for me." I nodded and I pulled on her hair. Her head rolled to the side and I attacked her neck with my lips. I mirrored her actions from before and she moaned. With my other hand, I gently grabbed her breast and flicked the nipple through her shirt. Her movements were becoming more frantic and I could feel her body prepare to come again. "I'm close, baby."

"I know, love," I breathed against her soft skin. "Let go, my Bella." She grabbed my face and pressed her kiss against mine. Our lips moved together, in an erotic duet. Her hips swiveled and her muscles clamped down on my cock for a second time. She threw her head back and kept moving over my cock. Seeing her come undone was my trigger for me to come again. I bit back a scream of my own and I spilled into her body.

We eventually returned to earth and disconnected. I handed Bella her panties and she slipped them onto her body. "Now, I understand when Alice says she's 'squishy,'" Bella said as she wrinkled her nose.

"Oh, God. I so didn't need to know that about my sister," I said as I pulled my boxers and jeans up my legs. "I was blissfully ignorant about her sex life until she started dating the hick. Now I hear intimate details, thanks to him. And now, you."

"Sorry, Edward," Bella laughed as she pulled on her jeans. "However, it's true. I feel squishy."

I arched a brow and she mimicked my actions. "At least I had the presence of mind to not rip your panties, my dear."

"Yes. I thank you for that," Bella said. "That definitely would have been unpleasant."

"Are you saying making love to me is unpleasant?" I pouted.



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"No. The aftermath is. Especially when a certain bronze-haired hottie steals my panties," Bella said, putting her hands on her hips. "I'm going to get my crap from my room and then let's get some dinner at The Cage."

I gave her a salute and handed her music to her. She took it and grimaced. "I still hate this song."

"Whatever, Bella," I laughed. She breezed out the room and I gathered my things. I waited for Bella at the foot of the stairs and we started to go down them. She suddenly remembered something that she left in my room. I unlocked it and it smelled like sex. I bit back a laugh at Bella's facial expression. "I know. I'll get some air freshener."

"That would be wise," Bella said as she picked up her fleece. "As much as I enjoyed what we did in there, I don't want other people knowing. The smell kind of gives it away."

"It's because you're so enticing, Bella," I said, looking at her seductively. "You bring out the animal in me."

"Okay, my lion. Your lamb needs food," she laughed. "All that work gave me an appetite." She tugged on my hand and we walked to The Cage and ate an unhealthy meal of cheeseburgers and fries.

After our dinner, we went to Express rehearsal. Rosalie broke out into laughter when she saw us. Bella quirked a brow. Rosalie walked up to me and moved my head forcefully to inspect my love bite. She looked at Bella and held up her hand. Bella gave her a high five and smirked at me. "Nice work, Bella."

"Don't encourage her," I laughed. "I'm convinced she's a vampire."

"Whatever, Edward," she said rolling her eyes. "It's not like I've never had a mark or twenty from you."

"Mine can be hidden, my love," I countered.

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"You two are insatiable," Rosalie guffawed. "Do you think I can work with you on 'Fever' tomorrow? I'm done with the choreography and I want to teach it to you."

"That's fine," we both answered.

"Now you share a brain. That's freaky," Rose giggled. "Come on, Bella. Hang out with me tonight. You need some female bonding."

Bella offered no resistance as Rose pulled her from my hold. She waved over her shoulder and we went through rehearsal. Unfortunately the pieces we worked on tonight were songs that I was not paired up with Bella. I was bummed. She spent most of the night with Tyler and Ben. I got to dance with Rose and Kate, who was still pissed at me about Tanya.

*Whatever. She made her bed. Now she has to lie in it.*

After rehearsal, Bella and I went home and put our final touches on our presentation for psychology. We were presenting tomorrow in class and we wanted to verify all of our information was on the slides and we were following our 'script.' After we did that a few times, we took a bath together. Bella insisted that there was not 'funny business' as she was tired and sore from our exertions in the practice room. We sat in the tub until the water cooled. We then watched some television and fell asleep in each other's arms.

xx LC xx

There was a buzz around the campus on Friday. It was the day before spring break. Teachers were antsy. Students were antsy. We were looking forward to the week off. However, it was also a popular day for tests and exams. We had a test in music theory. We had our presentation in psychology. I had a presentation in education. Bella had a test in biology.

She was still panicking about biology. She hadn't received her practical back from last week and she was fearful that she was failing the class. I told her to talk to Haddon, but she had already tried that route. I told her that if she did

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poorly on the practical, she needs to talk to Dr. Gianetti about Haddon. It is unfair for to be tested on something that she was not present for, due to a medical emergency. How much of a hard ass can he be?

After education, I waited for Bella outside of her biology classroom. I saw her finishing her test and she had a furrow on her brow. She walked up to turn in her exam and she was handed another paper in return. She smiled tightly and exited the room. She kissed me and handed me the paper and her bag as she put on her coat. I flipped the paper over and it was her practical. She had failed it, miserably. "Shit," I grumbled.

"Let me guess. F?" Bella asked.

"A 32%," I said as I handed her back the paper.

"Let's see. I wasn't there for this question, this question, this question, and oh, HALF THE TEST! I'm going to Dr. Gianetti. Can you come with me?" Bella begged

"Now?"

"Please?" she beseeched with her eyes. I nodded and we walked to Old Main. I sent a text to Alice telling her to inform Eleazar that Bella and I would not be in class due to an academic concern. We rode the elevator and walked to Dr. Gianetti's office. Inside the bland office space was a man sitting behind a desk.

"Can I help you?" he asked.

"Is Dr. Gianetti in?" Bella replied.

"Yes, he is. Do you have an appointment?" the man asked.

"No. I have a concern," Bella responded.

"Let me see if he's available. What's your name, sweetie?"

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"Isabella Swan."

"It'll be just a moment, Ms. Swan. Have a seat," he offered. Bella and I sat down in the chairs and waited for Dr. Gianetti.

Dr. Gianetti came out of his office and personally greeted us. "Hello, Ms. Swan. Mr. Cullen," he said with a smile. "Come into my office. Would either one of you like something to drink?"

"Can I get some water?" Bella asked timidly.

"Sure. Raul, can you get Ms. Swan some water?" Dr. Gianetti asked.

"Of course, Dr. Gianetti," he smiled. He scurried off and we were ushered into Dr. Gianetti's office.

"Have a seat. What's up?" Dr. Gianetti asked, concerning lacing his tone.

"I have a concern about one of my professors," Bella began. Raul returned and handed her water. She thanked him and turned back to Dr. Gianetti. "I'm not sure if you are familiar with what happened to me."

"I heard what happened and how you were in a horrendous car accident earlier in the semester. You had to miss a week of classes. Your professors, well some of them, worked with me to create alternative assignments for your missing classes."

"Well, most of my professors were very accommodating. However, my biology professor was not. He gave me an assignment to complete to make up the points for the missing lab work. But, he still assessed me on the information that was presented during the lab, even though I wasn't there. We took our practical last week and I just got my test back today," Bella explained.

"What did you get?" Dr. Gianetti asked.

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"An F, 32%. I never fail anything. However, I failed the test because half of the information that was being assessed I wasn't there for," Bella said as she pulled out her exam. "The questions circled in blue pen were the questions I was absent for the lab."

"That's more than half, Ms. Swan," Dr. Gianetti frowned. "Did you get the notes from your lab partner?"

"I did. However, it's not the same as *being* there and doing the lab," Bella argued.

"This is true. If your biology professor, Dr. Haddon, just assessed you on the questions you were there for, that would substantially increase your grade. Those were the few questions you got correct," Dr. Gianetti. He calculated the points. "You would have received a B."

"Was Dr. Haddon one of the professors who worked with you?" I asked.

"No. He and Dr. Hafenrichter were the two professors who refused my assistance," Dr. Gianetti smirked. "This is unacceptable. I've looked at your high school transcripts, Ms. Swan, when your case was brought to my attention. A straight A student with a lot of extracurriculars. That carried over to here at Emerson. You also managed to catch up on all your missing work from when you were out, earlier than the professors had assigned you. Let me talk to Dr. Haddon and I'll let you know what we decide. It may be another alternative assignment or modifying the test to assess what were present for."

"Thank you, Dr. Gianetti," Bella breathed.

"You're welcome. Have a good spring break," Dr. Gianetti smiled. He stood up and ushered us to his door. He shook Bella's hand and mine before he closed his office. Bella exhaled deeply and we could hear Dr. Gianetti bark into the phone, yelling at Dr. Haddon.

Bella smirked and she turned on her heel, almost skipping to the elevator. I chuckled and follow her. We walked back to Brandon and we head to our

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apartment. Bella started packing our bags for our spring break trip to Chicago. Rosalie texted us saying that she couldn't work with us on 'Fever' as she was starting to freak out over her trial. Bella called her and quickly put her at ease, comforting her as Bella could.

After most of our bags were packed, I checked my email. The photographer we worked with for our engagement pictures emailed me saying that he sent the photos on DVD to us earlier in the week. I grabbed my keys and went down to the mailroom to check our box. Sure enough, there was a large envelope from Leo inside. I grabbed the envelope and the rest of the mail, sorting through it and went back upstairs. "Bella? Leo sent our pictures to us."

She poked her head out of the bedroom. "Really?"

"Yep. Let's check them out," I said as I plopped down at the desk. I pulled Bella onto my lap after I loaded the DVD into the computer. We spent the next hour or so looking at the photos that Leo had taken. They were excellent. It didn't look like us. It looked like models that were similar to us who were very much in love. "Wow."

"Yeah, wow. You should go into modeling, Edward. You're fucking hot," Bella said, ruffling my hair.

"I was about to say the same about you, love," I teased, pulling on her ponytail. "Leo also sent directions for accessing the website." I handed the directions to Bella and she took them. She opened up Internet Explorer and typed in the web address. She put in our names and password that Leo created for us and our pictures were displayed on a sleek website. "He's good."

"He's really good," Bella breathed. "I want him to do our wedding photos."

"Good thing he offered in his email," I laughed.

Bella squealed and clapped. She kissed my cheek and turned back to the computer, opening a new window. She opened up her own email program and sent everyone in her address book the link and directions on how to access our

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engagement pictures. She also did the same to my email address and she bounced on my lap. "You're turning into the pixie," I teased.

"I know. However, the pictures are beautiful. Let's order some for the apartment," she said, a wide grin gracing her stunning face.

"Have at it, TinkerBella," I snorted.

"TinkerBella?" she asked.

"Alice is the Pixie. You're TinkerBella," I reasoned.

She shrugged and went to the website, choosing several different pictures that she liked. We ended up ordering a couple of 8x10s and a few 5x7s to place in frames around the apartment. We also ordered a page of wallets. I pulled out my credit card and handed it to her. She filled out the information and received confirmation that they would be sent while we were on break. I sent an email to Alistair asking him to pick up the package when it was delivered.

After we ordered the pictures, Emmett called us, asking if we wanted to go out for dinner with the group. Bella said she was not wanting to cook. So, we agreed. We decided on going to New Moon for dinner. Bella got all dressed up, wearing a pair of black leggings and a sexy blue tunic that hung off her shoulder. She styled her hair all curly and wild. She put on her sapphire jewelry and slipped on her black boots. I wore a pair of black jeans and a white button down shirt with my pin-striped vest. I decided to wear my black Chucks and we headed out to the car. We picked up Rose and Emmett from Patterson, meeting Alice and Jasper at the restaurant.

We got to New Moon and we were offered a table right away. We all got settled and placed our drink orders. Rose was very quiet, contemplative. I knew that Emmett wanted to get her out to forget about what was going to happen next week.

"I got your email Edward," Alice chirped. "And Bella. Leo did a wonderful job with your engagement photos."

## La Cantante

"Yeah, he did. I can't believe how good we look," Bella gushed.

"You missed your calling, Cullen. Your face just cries 'male model,'" Jasper teased.

"Does not," I laughed.

"Oh, please, Edward. Do you remember when you were in high school? We went to the mall one day over the summer and there was some seminar-thing with a bunch of talent scouts and modeling agencies. Every modeling agent pounced on Edward saying he was the next big thing. His eyes, his face, his hair, and his body. I think he walked away with like fifteen cards stuffed in his shorts," Alice laughed. "I wanted them to notice me, but unfortunately I was too short. I was also going through my punk phase. My hair was pink and blue."

"Yeah, that wasn't a good look for you, Pixie," I said, scrunching my nose.

"I thought I looked hot. However, the bleach ruined my hair. I had to chop it all off in order to damage control. Hence, the pixie do," she said as she waved her hand into her hair. "I like this better. And the color too."

"What's your natural, Alice?" Bella asked.

"Ugh, mousy, bleached brown," Alice groaned.

"So, like mine?" Bella clarified.

"No, Bella. You're hair is the color of mahogany, with red undertones. Your hair is gorgeous. Mine was the color of dirty dish water. Blech," Alice said.

"Why weren't you two in University Singers?" Jasper asked.

"We went to the Dean of Academic Integrity. I got my practical back from biology. I failed it. Horribly," Bella grumbled. "It's not right for me to be tested on material where I wasn't in attendance for."



## La Cantante

"That was a raw deal," Alice agreed. "I can't believe that Haddon did that. What did the dean say?"

"He's going to let us know after spring break," I explained.

The waitress arrived and took our orders. After she scurried off, Rosalie headed to the bathroom. Alice and Bella shared a look and followed her. Emmett heaved a sigh and put his head in his hands. I felt bad for the guy.

"How's Rose doing?" I asked.

"She's falling apart," Emmett sighed. "She's not ready to see Royce. She was making so many strides in the right direction and now it's all crumbling. She won't talk to me, won't touch me, and won't interact. The weirdest thing is that it all started today. She was fine yesterday and all this week. However, today, I got nothing."

"She's going back and facing the man who stole her innocence. Do you honestly expect her to be okay?" Jasper asked.

"No, I don't. However, it pains me to see her in such anguish," Emmett said, his face pulled into a frown. "Now I know how you felt, Edward. Any suggestions?"

"Just be there for her," I replied simply. "Let her come to you when *she's* ready. Don't push her."

Emmett nodded and the girls returned. Rose's cheeks were pink and her face looked like she had been crying. She sat down next to Emmett and laid her head against his shoulder. He pressed a kiss to her forehead and she gave him a small smile. I looked at Bella and she had some tearstains on her cheeks. I reached under the table and laced my fingers with hers. She turned to me and kissed my lips sweetly. "I love you, Edward."

"I love you more, my sweet girl," I replied. I kissed her lips three times and we pulled apart. Our food was brought out from the kitchen. We all dug in, except

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Rose. She picked at her food and pushed it around her plate. She looked a little better from the beginning of dinner, but she still had a lot weighing on her mind. We decided not get dessert. We settled our bill and headed out of the restaurant. We were walking back to our cars and Bella tugged on my hand. She pointed at a local tavern that had karaoke advertised. "Hey guys?"

"What's up, Cullen?" Emmett boomed.

"Who's up for karaoke?" I smirked.

"Ooh! I am! I am!" Alice cried, hopping on her toes. "Come on!" She grabbed Bella and Rose's hand and sprinted to the tavern. We followed the girls and went inside. We sat down at a large circular table in the middle of the room. Alice got up and brought back a binder of all the songs the DJ had available. She also had a handful of request slips. Bella took out a pen from her purse and we looked at the list of songs. We picked "Need You Now," by Lady Antebellum as a duet. Alice pretty much demanded we do "Summer Lovin'" as that was our signature song. I tried to encourage her to do with Jasper but she pouted and quivered her lip. I caved.

*Damn Pixie.*

The girls decided to "Lady Marmalade" and we decided to do "Single Ladies." We gave the DJ our first pile of requests and waited to be called up. Emmett and I went to the bar and got us some drinks. We carried the beverages to the table and we chatted about our upcoming spring break as we listened to some drunk woman singing "Black Velvet."

Bella and I were called up to the microphone first. We had performed this song with Breaking Midnight. However, it's different when you don't have a guitar in your hand and screaming fans. The introduction piped through the speakers and Bella readied herself for the first lines of music. She came in confidently, looking at my eyes. When I was supposed to come with the harmonies, I smirked and entered as confidently. We sang through the song and the people in the tavern all stopped what they were doing and listened to our duet. The drunk woman who sang "Black Velvet," was shocked at us. She scowled in our

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direction as I assumed she was the 'high flyer' on karaoke night. As we finished the song, the crowd erupted in loud cheers and whoops. Bella and I fed off the energy and completed the song with a flourish. The DJ sputtered and he thanked us for singing for him. I helped Bella off the stage and we walked back to our seats.

"Wow! You guys are so good together," Alice sighed. "Your voices blend so perfectly."

"Thanks, Alice," Bella blushed. I pulled Bella into my lap and kissed her temple. She sipped her water and leaned against me.

A few more people later, Alice and I were called up. I grumbled and got up with my sister. We sang "Summer Lovin'," hamming it up appropriately. Well, Alice hammed it up. I just reacted to her. She moved through the audience and the girls responded to her. I worked the guys, much to my chagrin. I was not an actor, at all. However, if it made the pixie happy, then I would oblige. We finished our song and Alice scampered off the stage, after she gave a curtsy. I laughed at her and helped her off the stage like I did with Bella. She eagerly accepted it and skipped to Jasper, plopping on his lap. Bella was giggling at her antics and I just shook my head, rolling my eyes. Rosalie finally cracked a smile as we sang "Summer Lovin'" and it was nice to see her join us in the fun.

Immediately after our performance of "Summer Lovin'," the girls were called up for "Lady Marmalade." It was the arrangement from *Moulin Rouge*! Rose took lead on this and she had a blast. The girls did some basic dance moves. Very seductive dance moves. My eyes bugged out at their movements. Jasper and Emmett had similar expressions on their faces as well. After the bridge, Bella step up to take lead. She winked and walked out to the audience. A few of the wait staff helped them onto various tables and they stood on the table tops finishing the song. The DJ called out their names and they each did a mini-solo. At the end of the song, they broke into perfect three part harmony, finishing the song with a bang. The DJ applauded them and they all bowed.

After the girls returned to our seats, they broke into a fit of giggles. "That was so much fun!" Rose smiled.

## La Cantante

"We make a great team," Bella said as she wrapped her arms around Alice and Rosalie.

"Yes, we do. Bella, leave Breaking Midnight and we'll kick some butt," Alice laughed.

"Let me think about it," Bella winked.

'Black Velvet' lady come up to us and she still had a scowl on her face. She looked at Bella and her face softened. "You've got some lungs, girl. Are you a professional singer?"

"I'm in school to be a music teacher," Bella said. "Thank you for the compliment."

"You're welcome. You all are very talented. Not to point fingers, but you and this young man are fantastic," she said as she put her hand on my shoulder. "It's great that you are in school to be a teacher, but you are much more talented than that. Good luck."

"Thanks," Bella smiled. 'Black Velvet' lady returned her smile and gathered her things to go. She gave us a wave and she left.

"She's going to miss the best part," Emmett whined.

"What's that, Em?" Rose teased.

"Us!" he said proudly. At that point in time, the DJ called us guys up to the stage and we headed up there. This was Jasper's idea and so I relinquished control to him. He stood in the center, smirking. The introduction began and he started shaking his hips. Emmett snorted and I held back a few laughs. Jasper was trying to do the "Single Ladies" dance. I actually knew it. We did it as a joke for Felix in Express last year. I swallowed my pride and started doing the dance. The crowd roared in laughter at our rendition of "Single Ladies." Emmett actually caught on to a few moves and he followed me pretty well. Jasper was lost. As I was sashaying my hips, I caught a glimpse of the girls.

## La Cantante

They were in stitches at our table. I hopped off the stage. I wasn't really singing anyway. I danced in front of the girls and Bella was laughing so hard she was crying. The song ended and I stopped shaking my money maker. An older woman actually came up to me and slipped a twenty in my back pocket. This caused the girls to break into another round of giggles.

We left the tavern after our crowd pleasing antics and headed back to our respective homes. As I was getting ready for bed, Bella started snorting. "What are you snorting at Ms. Swan?"

"You're on YouTube," Bella laughed. "Alice just sent me a link."

She held up her phone and sure enough, my skinny white ass was dancing to "Single Ladies" on YouTube, complete with the older woman slipping me a tip in my jeans.

*Fuck. Me.*

**A/N: Fun, eh? Up next, Chicago! Leave me some love! Thanks oodles! Also, thank you for your patience while I took my 'vacation' from La Cantante. I needed to reboot my brain and it's coming back to me. Anyhow, I'll update tomorrow. Hopefully. xoxox**

# The Windy City

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 78: The Windy City

### BPOV

Last night was a lot of fun. I mean the most fun I'd had ever. The cherry on top was Alice sending me the link of Edward doing the "Single Ladies" dance on YouTube and his reaction to seeing the link. His cheeks turned a shade of red and he covered his face in complete embarrassment. I tried to restrain my laughter, but failed miserably. Edward grabbed my phone and watched the video. He growled and called Emmett.

"Emmett McCarty Swan you are an asshole," Edward roared. I swiped the phone and put it on speaker phone. Edward narrowed his eyes and I just smiled sweetly.

"...it was too funny to NOT video," Emmett guffawed.

"But on YouTube?" Edward whined. "Couldn't you just 'store it' for blackmail material? Why post it on YouTube?"

"Oh, relax, Cullen. I have a private account. The only people who can see it are the emails I deem appropriate. That's yours, Bella's, Alice's, Jasper's and Rosalie's. Pull the stick out of your ass, man," Emmett laughed.

"You suck, Em," Edward grumbled.

"Why are you calling me from Bella's phone?" Emmett asked.

## La Cantante

"Bella got the link from Alice and showed me the video. I was too pissed off to search for my phone," Edward said, shooting a glare.

"Good job, Em," I chirped.

"Oh, hey Isabelly! I also got video of you and girls doing your song. That was epic."

"Thanks, Emmett. We aim to please," I giggled.

"We're going to go, Emmett. Delete that video. Please! I'm begging you," Edward pleaded.

"I'll consider it. Bye kids!" Emmett said as he ended the call.

I did the same and fell over on the bed in a hysterical fit of laughter. I pulled a pillow over my head and screamed. Edward grabbed my foot and dragged me to the edge of the bed, tossing the pillow away from my face. He lay down on top of me, his eyes flashing with something. Anger? Humor? "You are as bad as your brother," he said quirked a brow.

"Like I said before, you would make good money as a male stripper. Hell, you made \$20 tonight! You have an amazing body, Edward. PLUS, you can dance!" I giggled.

"Isabella Marie Swan," he warned. "I'm not going to take off my clothes for *money*. What I have to offer is for YOUR eyes only. Not some random old shrew who liked my ass."

"It's a fine ass, Edward," I said as I snaked my hands down to his firm behind, squeezing gently.

"Yours is better," Edward said as he flipped us and he cupped my ass cheeks, pulling my body to his. He reached up with one hand and he kissed my lips gently. "You also could make money, my love. What you and girls did on the tables was hot."

"Perhaps I'll do that as my side job. Bella Swan: Stripper Extraordinaire," I snorted. I hopped off his lap and stood up in the bedroom. I sashayed to the sound dock on the dresser and plopped my phone in it. I found a song that I liked and played it. As the smooth sounds of Sade floated through the room, I slowly turned toward Edward, stalking him like a huntress would stalk her prey. I released my hair from my clip and flipped my head. Edward's mouth dropped open when he realized what I was doing for him. I turned around and looked at him coyly. I swayed my hips and ran my fingers through my hair. Edward's breathing was erratic and I could hear him shift on the bed. I slowly turned and grabbed his hand. I forcefully pushed him into the chair in the corner of the room. His eyes darkened and his face moved up into a crooked smile.

I put my boot on the arm of the chair. "Unzip my boot, Edward," I commanded. He nodded and his fingers ghosted up my leg until he reached top of my boot. He slowly moved the zipper down until it was at the bottom. "Remove it." He did and I put my leg down. I switched with my other leg and he repeated his actions. After he removed both boots, I rotated my hips and moved my hands to my breasts. My pussy was right in Edward's face and I know he could tell what this was doing to me. I could see what it was doing to him. His cock was straining in his jeans.

I reached for the waistband of my leggings and I brought them down my legs. I sat down on Edward's lap and began dry humping him, like a stripper would do for a lap dance. I could feel him get harder against my core. I stayed there for a few moments and I got up. Edward groaned and I reached for his vest. I quickly unbuttoned it and pushed it off his shoulders. "Take your shirt off, Edward," I said as I turned around, still moving my body to the music. I was only wearing my blue tunic, panties and bra. As he was working on his shirt, I covertly removed my panties and tossed them across the room.

Edward had removed his shirt and unbuttoned his jeans. I looked at him and I got on the floor, crawling to him. When I got to him, I forced his legs open and pulled his zipper down with my teeth. "Fuck me," he breathed. I looked up at him through my lashes and gave him a smirk. I crawled up his body, and brought my face close to his, but never touching my lips to his skin. He



whimpered and his fingers moved up my legs.

I danced away and removed my bra from my body. I slipped it out from underneath the tunic and adjusted the blue fabric so it was hanging off one shoulder, my breast exposed. I brought my hand up to my breasts and I began fondling and playing with them. "Play with yourself, Edward," I said as I idly traced my hands over my chest. He removed his pants and boxers and he began stroking his cock, his eyes never leaving mine. "Are you enjoying the show?"

"Very much, Bella. You are so hot," he breathed as he worked his cock. I moved my right hand to my leg and I traced it up my leg. I raised the tunic and Edward finally saw that I was completely naked under my shirt. I traced my tattoo and his breathing grew rapid. "Touch yourself, Bella."

I moved my hand from my tattoo and reached the apex of my thighs. "Like this, Edward?" He nodded and he grunted. I ran my finger over my clit and I could feel the wetness seep down my legs. My eyes fluttered shut as I began pleasuring myself. I moved closer to Edward and put my leg on the armrest of the chair. Edward looked up at me and his eyes were filled with lust and desire. I continued rubbing my sensitive nub with my fingers and I could feel my own body react. I moaned and rotated my hips to the music. I dipped one finger into my soaking wet pussy and Edward groaned. I rocked against my hand and flicked my clit with my thumb. "Is this turning you on, Edward? Seeing me play with my pussy?" I breathed.

"Fuck, Bella. Yes," he groaned. He moved one hand to my leg and he stroked up my leg until he came to my core. His fingers ran over my slick folds. "You are so wet, Bella."

"Only for you, Edward," I said. "I need to feel you." He quickly removed his glasses and his tongue lapped at my clit. I erupted around my fingers at his sensual assault on my body. My knees buckled and Edward gently guided me to the ground. He spread my legs and he licked my body, focusing his attention to my clit. His fingers drove into my pussy and I could feel my body react to him. "All of you, Edward. Please."

## La Cantante

He pulled his mouth away and he lined up his cock to my entrance and he locked his eyes with mine. He slammed into me and my body arched off the floor. He was sitting on his haunches, with my legs draped over his hips. He moved his body quickly, unrelenting in his pace. With his thumb, he circled my clit and I could see a sheen of sweat on his gorgeous body. "Oh, Bella," he breathed. "I'm so close." His hair flopped into his eyes and he pulled one of my legs over his shoulder and he bent over me. I could hear his body slapping against mine and my body was ready to spring. I felt his dick twitch in my body and he spilled into me. His orgasm triggered mine and I screamed. Edward collapsed on top of me and he was breathing heavily. "I love you, my Bella."

"I love you, too, Edward," I said as I ran my fingers through his damp hair. "Did I make you feel good?"

He held up one finger and gathered his thoughts. He pressed a kiss to my collarbone and he kissed up my neck, finally ending with my lips. "You always make me feel good. Damn woman. You are insane."

"I hope insane is a good thing," I giggled.

"Insane is a good thing. You've done things to my body that I never thought imaginable," he breathed against my skin. "I'd never been able to go again so quickly until you. You are truly a sex goddess."

"I guess that makes you a sex god," I said against his lips. "My sex god."

"Damn straight. Only yours," he mumbled.

"Well, Sex God, I need you to get up. I think I got some rug burn going on and it's not the most comfortable," I said as I scratched his back.

"Oh, shit," Edward said as he gracefully got up, leaving my body. He held out his hands and pulled me up and tossed me over his shoulder.

"Edward!"

## La Cantante

"You bring out my inner-caveman," Edward teased as he threw me on the bed. He grabbed a pair of boxers for himself and a pair of panties for me.

"No pajamas," I squeaked.

"Nope. You're beautiful and I want to sleep with my almost-naked fiancée," he said. "However, I don't want you feeling 'squishy.'"

"Oh lord," I said as I rolled my eyes. I pulled off the tunic and slipped the panties that Edward gave me. He picked up his glasses from by the chair and put them onto the nightstand before slipping between the sheets. He turned off the light on the night stand and he held open his arms and I curled up next to him, enjoying the feeling our bare skin against each other. I kissed his heart and laid my head on his chest. "Good night, handsome."

"Good night, beautiful. I love you," he said sleepily.

"I love you, too."

xx LC xx

Saturday was a blur of packing, doing laundry and preparing for the gig at Eclipse. We were supposed to be off this week, but the band that was supposed to fill in for us flaked out. Edward was not happy as we had an early flight. We had all managed to get on the same flight. However, we were scattered all over the plane. When Emmett had purchased his tickets, the only ones available where in first class. Edward told him to buy two tickets and we would give him our tickets. We switched the tickets with the airlines and Edward paid Emmett for his tickets and he said he would pay Edward after he cashed his check. Clear as mud, right? Whatever, it made sense to them and we all have tickets.

We set up at Eclipse and did a quick rehearsal in the afternoon. Kellan was happy that we were able to come in last minute and he said he'd work it out for us get a bonus in our check. We got some dinner before performing. We were all frazzled at the performance tonight. We decided to all old music. We only added one new song and that was a duet between Edward and Jasper, "More

than Words."

We returned to Eclipse and waited in the green room for Kellan to pull us out to the stage. When he did, his face was lit up like a Christmas tree. He said that our performing caused an influx of patrons and they were packed to the gills. He smiled and darted out into the club, announcing us to the crowd. They screamed and roared and we headed out to the stage.

Our set went really well. The audience was very receptive and we thrived off the energy they gave us. They begged for an encore. Kellan pleaded with his eyes. We played three more songs, ending with "Decode." Afterward, Kellan was dancing and bouncing in the green room on his phone. He was speaking quickly to someone and he thrust his cell phone into Edward's hands when we all got into the green room. "Kellan?"

"Talk," Kellan demanded. "You'll be happy."

"Hello?" Edward asked speculatively. "Hold on. Let me put you on speaker." Edward fumbled with Kellan's phone and managed to put the caller on speaker without hanging up on them. "Okay, go ahead."

"As I was saying, my name is Miller O'Leary and I'm a talent scout for Twilight Recording Studios. Mr. Moore sent over a live recording of your band to me about a month ago and I was floored. He called me tonight as you were performing and I listened in, watching a live webcast he had set up. You guys are phenomenal!" Miller enthused.

"Thank you for the compliment, Mr. O'Leary," Edward said, raising his brows.

"I'd like to meet with you guys as a band. And call me Miller," he said. "When are you available?"

"We all are college students and this is our spring break. We're going to Chicago for the week. We're leaving tomorrow," Edward explained.

## La Cantante

"We have an office in Chicago. How about we shoot for Friday at 2:00?" Miller suggested.

"Um, that should be fine. We have a friend of ours who is involved in a criminal case. One of our members is involved with that friend and he might not be available, but the rest of us will be there," Edward shrugged.

"Awesome! Here's my phone number," Miller said. I whipped out my phone and programmed it as he told us his number. I also jotted down where we were supposed to meet Miller and the time in my calendar. "I look forward to meeting all of you in person."

"Thanks, Miller," Edward said, with a slight smile. "Call these numbers if anything changes." He rattled off my cell phone along with his. We heard Miller scratching down the information.

"See you on Friday," Miller said. He ended the call and Edward did the same.

He handed Kellan back his phone and he was trembling in his skin. "This is HUGE! Twilight Recording Studios is one of the biggest studios in the country!"

"I know," Edward mumbled. "Holy shit!"

Kellan crossed his arms, looking very pleased with himself. "You guys are ginormous locally. I get phone calls nightly about when you're playing next. Your energy, your passion, your connection, everything reels in the audience! Also, your looks are amazing. There's a Facebook fan page for each of you in the band. Edward and Bella, you two are the most popular. There's even a page for your relationship."

"No way," I breathed.

"Check it out," Kellan challenged.

## La Cantante

I grabbed my phone and opened up Facebook and typed in 'Breaking Midnight.' Sure enough, there were six sites that cropped up. One for each member, one for Edward and I and the final one was for the band itself. The guys all huddled over my shoulders and high-fived each other over our 'celebrity.' Well, Emmett and Jasper did. Edward stood behind me and wrapped his arms around my waist. "Are you okay with this, Bella?"

I leaned against him and sighed. I nodded and he kissed my cheek. Kellan shook the guys' hands and gave me a hug, congratulating us. I knew we needed to do something for him. Hire him or compensate him for his help with Breaking Midnight.

We dismantled the stage quickly, putting our equipment into the storage facility that Kellan now provided for us. Afterward, he offered the VIP lounge, but we declined. We told him about our flights and he pushed us out of the club. We drove back to campus, dropping off Emmett and Jasper. We then went to our apartment and showered before heading to bed for a few hours of shut eye.

xx LC xx

"What the hell is that beeping sound?" Edward mumbled. "Make it stop."

I raised my head from my pillow and the beeping sound was my phone. We had slept through our alarm. "Edward! Get up!" I said smacking his ass. "We slept through the alarm." I hopped over him and fell in the process. "Ouch! That hurt!" I hopped to the bathroom, brushing my teeth and pulling my hair into a ponytail. I threw my makeup, contacts and blow dryer into the suitcase that was right outside the bathroom and went back in the bedroom. "Edward Anthony! Get your ass up! We needed to be on the road fifteen minutes ago."

He poked his head up and grabbed his phone. "Fuck!" he cried as he stumbled out of bed. He got all tangled in the bed sheets and fell flat on his face. "Damn it! Your clumsiness is rubbing off on me."

## La Cantante

I bent down and untangled the sheets from his feet and helped him up. He ran into the bathroom and I heard him curse his way through his morning routine. I finished my packing and dragged my bag into the foyer. I pulled on a pair of comfy jeans and a green sweater. I slipped on my Chucks and grabbed a Pop Tart while I waited for Edward. He came out a few moments later, looking equally as frazzled. He was in a pair of jeans, a tan sweater and his Doc's. Edward grabbed his keys and tossed them to me and we headed down to the Volvo. I unlocked the car and slid into the driver's seat. Edward loaded our luggage into the back. He had a tendency to be a bit of speed demon and it only escalated when he was flustered. I eased the car out of the parking spot and drove to Patterson. We were supposed to pick up Rose and Emmett. They were standing outside the dorm. Emmett was furious and Rose was trying to calm him down.

"Dude! Where were you?" Emmett yelled. "We're going to miss our flight."

"Emmett, we slept through the alarm," I said, hopping out of the car. "Chill."

"You better floor it, Isabelly," Emmett grumbled as he slid in behind me. Rose smacked him and slammed the door shut after she eased into the car. I drove onto the street and headed toward the highway. We made good time as there was no traffic and Edward insisted we park in the regular lot. We unloaded our bags and walked to the airport terminal. We checked in and handed over our luggage. We were ushered through security and we all traipsed to our gate, with plenty of time to spare. I shot Emmett a glare and he shrugged.

Jasper and Alice arrived a little bit later. They were ruffled and Jasper had a on satisfied smirk.

*EWWWWWWWWWWWWWWW!*

Edward shuddered and buried his head in my shoulder. I gently patted his head as he made gagging noises in my ear. "They all grow up sometime."

"I need to bleach my brain," Edward mumbled.

## La Cantante

"Poor baby," I teased. I kissed his soft hair and settled in with my book. An hour later, our flight was called and we all lumbered into our seats. Edward and I were in first class and the rest of them were in coach. As soon as the plane took off, I snoozed on Edward's lap, with his fingers tracing my face and running through my long hair.

Edward gently roused me as we approached O'Hare Airport. I sat up and stretched. I reached into my carryon and popped in a piece of gum. Edward laced his fingers with mine and we gently floated down into Chicago airspace. When the plane pulled up to the terminal, we all headed out. Edward called the hotel and they had provided us with a shuttle. They gave Edward the driver's cell phone number and he called him up. He told him that he would meet us at one of the vestibules in the baggage claim area for pick up.

A sleek stretch Hummer pulled up and a tall, African American man stepped out. "Hello. I'm Amun and I'll be your driver today. I'm looking for the Cullen party?"

"That's us," Edward smiled. Amun smiled and he helped us into the limo, putting our bags in the storage compartment. Before he shut the door, Amun offered us some food and beverages. Emmett pulled out a couple of beers and water bottles for us. We drove to the W Hotel off of Lakeshore Drive and checked into the opulent hotel. After we got settled, we all hung out in our room as it was the biggest. We ordered room service and decided on getting a movie.

After the movie was over, Rose and Emmett headed down to their room. Rosalie wanted to get a good night's sleep as she had to meet with the prosecuting attorney tomorrow morning at eight. Opening arguments for her trial were starting on Monday afternoon. Alice and Jasper stayed up with us for a bit longer before they also headed to their room.

When everyone had left, Edward went into the bathroom and showered. I unpacked our clothes and hung them in the closet. I also took out what we were wearing for tomorrow and ran the iron over our clothes. I changed into some pajamas and lay down in the bed. I took out my book that I started in the



## La Cantante

airport and waited for Edward to come out of the bathroom. My eyelids drooped and I vaguely remembered Edward removing the book from my hands and removing my glasses. He got into the bed and I cuddled next to him, falling into a deep, restful sleep.

**A/N: Short filler chapter. No drama. Fun lemon though. Up next will be the opening arguments of Rose's trial and some drama...Leave me love, please! :)**

# Masen

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 79: Masen

### EPOV

I was definitely not happy when we had slept through the alarm. However, by God's good graces we got to the airport on time. The flight was dull and we arrived at the hotel. I hopped in the shower when everyone had headed down to their rooms. I found Bella asleep on the bed, holding her book, *Water for Elephants*, with her glasses askew. I took the book from her hands and gently removed her glasses. I lay down and she cuddled against my chest. I kissed her forehead and held her tightly to my body, relishing in her warmth.

I finally began to fall asleep when Bella started twitching and squirming. She was having a nightmare. I held her closely and hummed her lullaby. Usually when she had her nightmares, they were stopped when I hummed to her. However, it didn't happen tonight. "Bella?" I whispered against her hair.

She jostled awake and whimpered. "What?"

"You were having a nightmare, love," I said kissing her cheek.

"Subconsciously, I'm worried about Rose," Bella sighed. "Sorry if I woke you, Edward."

"Baby, I wasn't asleep," I replied.

"Why?"

## La Cantante

"I don't know. Perhaps I'm stressing about Rose and her situation. It all hits a little too close to home," I said, cupping her chin. "However, you never were raped. Thank GOD!"

"Yeah. However, he got close," Bella shuddered.

"But never succeeded," I said, kissing her forehead. She yawned and moved closer to me. "I love you so much, my beloved Bella."

"I love you, too, Edward. You make me feel so safe and loved. I don't know what I would do without you," she sighed.

"I feel the same way, Bella. I'm home when I'm with you," I said, running my fingers through her hair. She yawned and nestled into the crook of my neck. "Sleep, my love."

She nodded and her breathing evened out. My own eyes drooped and I quickly followed Bella into dreamland.

xx LC xx

I woke up early the next morning. I had lied to Bella in saying I was stressing about Rose's trial. While I love Rosalie and her ordeal was atrocious, I was more nervous about possibly seeing my sperm donor. When my mom met my dad, he was in law school. He eventually became one of the most sought after defense attorneys in the greater Chicago-land area. My mom was rich, but my sperm donor was rolling in the dough. Especially after he won a very lucrative trial involving a known mob boss. I'm thinking that my college education was being paid for by the mob and that blood money. I was fearful that my father would have taken Royce on as a client. He's the perfect person he'd defend. Young, rich, and extremely guilty. I bet Royce's family is paying a pretty penny for his attorney and my dad probably jumped at the chance.

I moved into the living room of our suite and I hopped on the internet. I wanted to see if there any news stories about Royce and his defense. There were a handful, but none of them listed who represented him. I scrubbed my face and

began pacing the room.

"Edward?" Bella croaked.

I stopped my frenetic walking and looked at a very confused Bella. "Morning, beautiful," I said, my voice very tense.

"You're pacing. That's never good. Why are you pacing, Edward?" Bella asked.

"Don't be pissed. But I lied to you," I said sheepishly. "I care about Rose, but I'm worried about the possibility of seeing my dad."

"Edward, Chicago is a city of 5 million people. What are the odds that you would see your father?" she questioned.

"Um, pretty good. Royce is the perfect person for him to represent. He's a defense attorney," I answered.

"Okay, so..." Bella prodded. "What are you going to do if you do see him?"

"I don't know. I'm pretty certain I'd get arrested if I cut off his balls," I answered.

"Most likely, Edward. Seriously?" Bella pressed as she sat down in front of my computer.

"I really haven't got a clue," I answered, flopping down on the couch next to her. "I hate him. He said he loved my mom so much, but he essentially abandoned her when she got sick. He abandoned me when she died."

"Edward, he's a douche. However, he's your father. The only one you are going to get," Bella said quietly.

"No, he's my sperm donor. For all intents and purposes, Carlisle is my father," I said, looking over the rims of my glasses.

## La Cantante

"I understand, Edward. Truly, I do. However, like I said before, we're in a city of 5 million people. The likelihood of us seeing him is slim to none. Let's not stress about this unnecessarily until we see that your 'sperm donor' is Royce's attorney. If he is, we'll deal. If not, great," Bella said, lacing her fingers with mine. "However, let's think of the advantages of you being there. It may cause your dad to not be on his 'A' game and he'll royally fuck up the trial and Royce will get a million years in jail."

"I like the way you think, Bella. You're devious," I said, pulling her to my side, kissing her forehead.

"I try, Beyonce," Bella laughed.

"I'm never going to live that down, am I?" I scowled.

"Unfortunately not," Bella sighed. "I got a text from Pixie. They want to get breakfast in an hour. You game or do you want to sulk some more?"

"Meanie," I grumbled. "Let's go."

Bella nodded and went to shower. I fussed over my hair and got dressed in a pair of black khakis and a dark charcoal grey cashmere sweater (thanks to Alice). Bella walked out of the bathroom wearing something similar to my outfit and I snorted.

"What?" Bella said. She then looked at my clothes and looked at hers. "Damn it. I'll change."

"Bella, don't worry about it," I laughed.

She waved her hand and grabbed a bright red sweater and switched it with her gray shirt. She finished getting ready and we headed down to the restaurant. The rest of our group were already there, waiting for us to arrive. We all were dressed up, prepared to go to the courthouse with Rose. She had a meeting with the prosecutor at ten this morning and then opening arguments were going to take place this afternoon. We were seated in the restaurant. Bella made sure to

## La Cantante

sit next to Rosalie. We ate a somber breakfast. Rose and Emmett were on edge. I was constantly looking over my shoulder and everyone else reacted to our reactions.

After breakfast, Rose and Emmett headed to the state's attorney office for their meeting. The rest of us decided to head to Water Tower Place for some shopping and what not. Alice snatched Bella away from me and they wandered off. Bella gave me a look of panic and I chuckled. Jasper and I decided to meander around Brookstone and sit in the massage chairs. We sat down in the chairs and started our 'massages.'

"So, Edward, what do you think about this whole Twilight Record meeting?" Jasper asked.

"I'm a bit leery," I answered honestly. "I mean, Kellan has been nothing but supportive and in our corner for the entire time we've known him, but I smell something a bit off."

"How so?"

"He seems almost TOO willing to help. He knows his stuff, but it's almost like he's itching to become our manager or something," I said. "I had my parents' lawyer look into him and he seems legit. However, I just don't know if I truly trust him."

"Interesting," Jasper mused. "I kind of got the same read off him. It's almost funny how we are so cynical to believe that his acts of kindness are based out of monetary gain."

"Yeah, well, I'll remain a cynic until he reacts otherwise," I replied.

Jasper chuckled and shifted in his chair, leaning back. "So, how are things going with you and Bella?"

"Good. We had a bit of a tiff when she was sick, but things have bounced back," I smiled.

"What happened?"

"Bella got all snippy about me helping her and coddling her. I called her on it and she ended up bawling in the bathroom. I know I was an ass when I spoke to her. She's very stubborn and very proud, refuses any kind of help. When she's not at her best, she lashes out. I've gotten the brunt of it. Since then, she's apologized and things have improved," I responded.

"That's good. You two are like the same entity. It's freaky. You are both different, but not. She's picked up on your mannerisms and you've picked up some of hers," Jasper said with a sly grin. "However, you both work so well together and I know that things are going to be perfect for you."

"Thanks, Jasper," I said, giving him a warm smile. "How are things going with Alice?"

"Fucking awesome," he beamed. "I really meant it when I said she was my lobster."

"I'm glad you found each other," I snorted. "Lobster Boy."

Jasper turned his hands into claws and he pretended to pinch me. I swatted his hands away and got up from the chair. I roamed around the store, in awe and shock of all of the random things that were in there. I mean, who needs a \$70 UV-C Sanitizing Wand? I sure as hell don't. That's why they created Clorox Wipes, people. Use a little elbow grease.

We met up with the girls and decided to walk back to the hotel and hang out before heading to the courthouse. Alice was carrying several bags and wearing a huge grin. Bella just shook her head and we headed back to the hotel. After a block or so, Alice started whining and I hailed a cab. We piled in and drove the rest of the way. We all hung out in our suite and watched some television. I ordered some room service and had it delivered. We ate our lunch and headed to the Cook County Courthouse around one. The trial was slated to begin at 1:30.

## La Cantante

We walked through the metal detectors and met up with Rose and Emmett in the courtroom. Rose's face was flushed and she looked visibly upset. Bella sat next to her, twining her fingers with her. I heard her quietly comfort Rosalie. I sat on the other side of Bella and I put my arm around her waist as we waited for the trial to begin. It was a pretty high profile case. There were a number of reporters, ready with their tape recorders and pads of paper. The lawyers had already chosen the jury this morning.

A few moments before 1:30, the prosecution team came in and settled at the table closest to us. The attorney who was trying the case for the state gave Rose a smile and wink. Rosalie smiled weakly in return, giving her a thumbs up. I heard a bustle in the hallway and in the window of the doors, flashes of cameras. A loud booming voice came through doors and the bustle dissipated. The door opened up and my worst nightmare walked in.

*Edward Masen, Sr.*

I paled and slunk in my seat. Bella noticed my change in demeanor and she looked at the defense attorney. She automatically recognized the resemblance. I had my mother's coloring, but inherited my father's build and stance.

"Is that your father?" Bella hissed.

I gulped and nodded. I prayed that he wouldn't see me. I watched him set up his station at the table opposite the prosecuting attorney. He pulled out several large files and placed his large case on the floor. He wore a very expensive suit, probably worth thousands of dollars. He scanned the courtroom and laid his eyes on Rosalie and sneered. His grey eyes were cold and distant. His brown hair was immaculately cut and had the perfect amount of 'distinguishing' grey. He had a full beard that covered his face and he gave Rose a crooked smirk. It mirrored my smirk.

I ducked my head and wanted to crawl in a hole. Bella stiffened next to me and she elbowed me in the ribs. *He* was looking right at me. His eyes filled with sadness. I held his gaze, unable to look away. Very quickly, his gaze returned to its cold and distant glare and sneered at me as well. He turned to a bailiff and



## La Cantante

barked some orders at him. The bailiff scurried off, obviously afraid of my father and did his bidding. *He* sat down and began shuffling through his papers. The bailiff returned with a tall blond man, who was wearing a confident grin. He placed the man next to my father and they conversed quietly. The jury was led in by a separate bailiff and he nodded to the original.

"All rise," the bailiff announced. "The Honorable Judge McAfee presiding."

An older woman walked in to the courtroom and sat down at the bench. "Please be seated. Thank you. We are here for the trial of Royce King vs. The State of Illinois. Mr. King is charged with five counts of aggravated sexual assault in the first degree; three counts of sexual misconduct in the first degree; and sodomy. Some introductions, please?"

"I'm Rebecca Caulfield, representing the State of Illinois. My co-counsel is Matthew Gerberman," the prosecuting attorney said as she stood up.

"I'm Edward Masen, Sr., representing Mr. Royce King," my father said tersely.

"Excellent," Judge McAfee said. "Now, I want to remind everyone of my rules in my courtroom. You will all be quiet and respectful. If you are not, you will be held in contempt of court, paying the state of Illinois \$500. No funny business. Clear?"

"Yes, your honor," both attorneys replied.

"Okay, we're going to begin with opening statements. Prosecution, you're up first," Judge McAfee said.

The prosecuting attorney began her statement and spoke for about fifteen minutes, outlining the crimes of Royce King. She told of his past crimes in explicit detail. I cringed at what this animal did to women, Rose in particular. How anybody could do that to another person is beyond me. I watched Royce as Rebecca described his crimes and he almost appeared proud of what he had done. The prosecution finished their opening statements and the judge indicated for my father to begin. He stood up and clapped Royce on the

shoulder.

"When you look at that man, do you see a rapist? A sexual deviant? I don't. I see a young man who was going through college and had his innocence stolen away. Past girlfriends who felt that he'd 'wronged' them and they cried rape. The prosecution's main witness was in a relationship with my client. However, just because he broke up with them, they cried that he attacked them. Raped them. Sodomized them. It didn't happen. Mr. King is a fine, upstanding young man who is a son of a prominent entrepreneur and philanthropist. Mr. King is a brilliant man who would have graduated from Northwestern this year, with honors. Mr. King is not a sexual deviant. He most certainly not a sexual deviant. Does he have certain predilections? Yes. Most men do. As do most women. Does he know how to control himself? Definitely. Should he be convicted of this crime? No. In this case, I will prove to you, ladies and gentlemen of the jury that this young man was framed and is innocent of the crimes he's being tried for. I will also prove to you that, without a reasonable doubt, that he did not rape these women as he is accused. I look forward to working with you and I hope you see my view on this case. Thank you," my father said smoothly. He walked back to his chair and sat down.

"Seeing the time, we will recess until tomorrow until nine where the prosecution will call its first witness," Judge McAfee said. She stood up and exited the courtroom, as did the jury. The bailiff stood by Royce and escorted him out of the room and my father began packing up his belongings. He finished up and strode past me, giving me an icy glare. I shrank back in my seat and all the hatred and pain I felt when my mother died crashed back to me. Bella laced her fingers with mine and she looked at me. I couldn't tear my eyes from the retreating form of my father.

*Did he ever really love me? Was I merely a mistake?*

"I have to get out of here," I mumbled. I shot up and ran out of the courtroom. I found the nearest bathroom and fell to my knees, hurling my lunch and breakfast into the toilet. I sat down and curled up on the floor of the nasty bathroom, tears spilling down my face. I hated him. In one moment, he made me feel like I was a lost nine year old boy again, not worthy of his love.

## La Cantante

Jasper came into the bathroom and he knelt next to me. "Edward, man, are you okay?"

Not trusting my voice, I shook my head.

"Did you know someone in there?" Jasper asked.

"The defense attorney," I whispered. "He's...he's....my father."

"Shit," Jasper said as he sat down on the floor next to me. "I thought he looked familiar. No offense, man, but you're dad's a douche."

"Tell me about it," I mumbled. I took off my glasses and wiped my face. "He's a hateful, spiteful man. He will burn in the deepest pits of hell. All because of the scum he represents and how he treats his own son."

"Fuck," Jasper whispered. "I noticed the glares he was giving in our direction, but I thought those were directed to Rosalie, not you."

I got up off the floor and went to wash my hands. I also ran some water over my face, trying to erase the tearstains I had on my cheeks. "You got any gum, Jas? I kind of hurled and I got a foul taste in my mouth."

Jasper reached into his pocket and handed me some gum. I popped it in my mouth and took a deep breath. "How's Rose?"

"Ready to castrate Royce and your dad," Jasper chuckled.

"She can get Royce. I want to pummel my father," I growled. "Dirty fucker." I heaved myself away from the sink and moved to the door. I held the door for Jasper and he walked out. I followed him and walked directly to Bella. She was holding my coat and she was nibbling on her lip. I turned her around and wrapped my arms around her, inhaling her sweet scent, allowing it to comfort me. She put her arms around my waist and she held me tightly. The tears I thought I was over spilled over my cheeks and I cried into Bella's shoulder. She gently scratched my back and let me cry. "I hate him, Bella," I whispered.

## La Cantante

"I know, Edward. I hate him, too," she soothed. "I'm proud of you. You held it together. I love you, so much."

"I love you, too," I murmured in her hair. I pulled away and gave her a sweet kiss on her lips. "Thank you."

"It's my turn to be strong for you, Edward," she said as she gently cupped my cheek. "You're going to do this. If not for yourself, for Rose. She needs our combined strength. She followed you out of the courtroom. Emmett caught her and he's calming her down. She may stick a stiletto into your father's ass."

"I'll hold him down," I chuckled darkly.

She laced her fingers with mine and we walked to the exit of the courthouse. Alice and Jasper were huddled near the exit. Alice sprinted toward me and hugged me tightly. "I'm sorry, Edward."

"It's okay, Pixie. I'll be fine," I answered, kissing her head. She squeezed me tighter and gave me a smile. "Where's Rose and Emmett?"

"Outside," Jasper said. I nodded and slipped my jacket onto my shoulders.

Bella twined her fingers again with mine and we walked out to find Emmett and Rose standing outside. Rose had a cigarette between her lips and she was pacing. I moved closer to them and I stood next to Emmett. Rose turned around and looked at me. "You know something, don't you, Edward?"

"Yeah. The defense attorney for Royce. He's my biological father," I said shamefully. "I had an inkling it might be him. I was praying it wasn't him, but unfortunately it is."

"He's a fucking douche bag. I can't believe you're his son. You are an angel and he's the devil incarnate," Rose spat. "I was 'wronged?' What the fuck? I was not wronged by Royce. I dumped his sorry ass. He's the one who fucking RAPED me. Seriously, your father is in for a major ass kicking if he wins. Would you be pissed if I kill him?"

"No, Rose. I'd help," I sighed. "He is a douche bag."

"Okay, Cullen, if that asshat is your father, why aren't you living with him?" Emmett asked.

"He couldn't raise me, after my mom died. He tried but I reminded him too much of her. He wouldn't cook; buy groceries, clean or anything. Esme found me when I had been without food for about a week. The cereal was long gone and I had eaten everything I could get my hands on. He was in a drunken stupor, passed out on the couch. Esme took me home with her and Carlisle pretty much told him off. He signed over his parental rights by the end of the week," I said sadly. "I'm glad he did. Seeing his hatred in his eyes today solidified it. That man is not my father. The only thing we share is DNA and that's it."

"Was he an attorney when you were a kid?" Rose seethed.

"Yeah. However, he handled civil cases, not criminal cases. My mom insisted he not deal with criminals. He agreed until she got sick and her medical bills started piling up. He then switched to criminal defense and he increased his salary substantially. He buried himself in his work until she died."

"Fucking douche," Rose growled. "He's got me smoking again! Damn!"

We heard a crowd exiting the courthouse and the reporters were all surrounding my father. They were asking him questions about the trial and he was taking it all in. As he walked past us, he caught my eye and he sneered at me. I returned his look and placed my arm around Bella protectively. Rose glared at him and he gave her a lopsided smirk. He strode past us and jumped into a black Mercedes that peeled away from the curb.

"We need to do something to focus our attentions on something else," Alice chirped.

"Alice, I'm not really in the mood," Rose grumbled.

## La Cantante

"Me neither, Pixie."

"No, we are doing something fun. Yes, we're here for a sucky reason, but it's still our spring break and we need to have FUN!" Alice argued.

"What do you have in mind, darlin?" Jasper asked.

"Millenium Park. Ice skating!"

**A/N: Yeah, Edward's dad is a fucktard. Hateful, evil man...however, don't give up on him. Up next, Alice's suggestion of ice skating, lemony goodness and Rose on the witness stand. Leave me love! Xoxox! If you are liking this story, check out my other one, Witch Way. It's still early in the story (planning on updating tomorrow for that one!).**

# Explanations

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*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 80: Explanations

### BPOV

I could NOT believe that Royce's attorney was Edward's father. They were nothing alike. Edward is kind, generous, loving, compassionate, brilliant and perfect. His father was cruel, malicious, hateful, cold and mean. The only similarities that I saw were physical. Edward had his father's build and height. I can also see where he got his crazy hair. His father's hair was tamed, but it was similar. He also had the same facial expressions as Edward. The crooked smirk was creepily the same. However, when Edward did it, it was cute and handsome. When his father did it, it was mean and sadistic. The looks that he gave Rosalie and Edward were some of the coldest looks I'd ever seen. He had hatred in his eyes.

I was so distraught at seeing my strong fiancé crumble under his penetrating gaze. He held it together during opening statements, but as soon as his father left, Edward bolted. Jasper followed him, worried about his friend. Rosalie also ran off, ready to shove her Christian Louboutin heel into Edward's father's ass. I didn't know where to go. Emmett followed Rose and Alice stayed with me while we waited for Jasper and Edward. They exited from men's room and Edward looked like he had been crying. He walked right up to me and enveloped me into a hug. I felt his tears against my sweater and I was heartbroken. I comforted him, giving him all of my love that he needed. He calmed down and he headed out to check on Rosalie. She was outside smoking and as predicted she was ready to kill Royce and Edward Sr.

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We watched as Edward Sr. left the building, sneering at Rose and Edward as he left. Edward wrapped his arm around my waist protectively and he returned his sneer. Edward Sr. jumped into a waiting car and it drove off. Alice was determined to make things better for all of us. Edward and Rosalie were not in the mood. However, in her own special way, Alice would not take no for an answer. She suggested ice skating at Millennium Park.

*Hell no.*

However, she insisted that we go. She stomped to the curb and hailed a cab and she pushed us into the taxi. It drove us back to the hotel. Alice said for us to meet in the lobby in fifteen minutes, ready to skate. Edward and Rosalie scowled at the evil little fairy, but relented. I was just praying that I didn't injure myself. We got back in our room and I changed into a pair of jeans, leaving on the sweater that I had on earlier. Edward put on his jeans and he was still frowning.

"Edward, Alice is trying to help," I said as I walked toward him.

"I know. I just am struggling," he sighed.

"Do you want to call Carlisle and Esme?" I suggested.

"I probably should." He reached into his pocket and dialed the home number. He put it on speaker and placed it on his knee, pulling me next to him. He laced his fingers with mine, resting his head on my shoulder. The phone rang a few times and Esme picked up. "Hi, Mom."

"Hello, Edward. How's Chicago?"

"Awful," Edward answered miserably.

"What's wrong? Is everything alright?" Esme asked, panic in her voice.

"You'll never guess who's representing Rose's rapist," Edward sighed.



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"No. Oh, no," Esme cried. "Did you see him?"

"Yeah. He looked right at me and I could feel his hatred," Edward said quietly, tears spilling onto his cheeks.

"Oh, my sweet boy," Esme sighed. "I can't speak for your father, but I know he doesn't hate you."

"His glares and sneers say otherwise. Was I a mistake? It sure looks like it," Edward mumbled dejectedly.

"Edward, you were not a mistake. Like any child, you are blessing. Your father couldn't handle raising a young child. He made poor choices and his choices brought you into our lives. Please know that both Carlisle and I love you tremendously. We are so proud of you and all that you've accomplished. You're brilliant, talented, handsome and so loving. Don't let his mistake bring you down."

"It's hard not to. I mean, I'm his *SON*. I share his DNA and he looked at me like I was no better than the dirt under his shoes," Edward muttered.

"I don't know what to tell you, Edward. I know that you are there for Rosalie, but my suggestion is to ignore him. Treat him like another faceless lawyer. If he doesn't want to associate himself with you, then it's his loss. I love you, my sweet boy," Esme said sweetly.

"I love you, too, Mom," Edward sighed. "I'll try to ignore him. However, I'm not making any promises."

"I think your old therapist is still in Chicago. Do you want the number?" Esme offered.

"No. I'll be fine. I'll try your suggestion, Mom. Thanks," Edward said.

"Not a problem. Is Bella there?" Esme asked.

"I'm here," I replied.

"Make sure that Edward doesn't wallow. Focus his mind *elsewhere*," Esme said. "If you know what I mean."

"Got it, Esme," I giggled. Edward's face was a perfect combination of shock and disgust. "I'll do just that."

"Bye Edward," Esme laughed and she clicked off the phone.

"Did my mom just suggest you sex me up to make me forget about my sperm donor?" Edward squeaked.

"Yes. Yes she did. I'll be doing that tonight, my love," I said, nibbling on his neck. "However, Alice is probably ready to go freeze her ass off on the skating rink. Come on, handsome." I tugged on his hand and tossed him his jacket. His face still registered shock and he shook it off.

We rode down the elevator and met up with the rest of our group in the lobby. Amun was talking to Alice and he appeared to be driving us to Millennium Park. We piled into a Acura SUV and he dropped us off near the skating rink. We walked up to the skate rental and got skates, except for Alice. She had a bag over her shoulder and she plopped down on the bench. Alice took out a pair of skates and she laced them up. They looked expensive. I nudged Edward and he chuckled. "Alice used to take lessons. She's actually really good. She was training for a run at Nationals until she jacked up her right knee."

"Really?" I asked. "Damn." I sat down and tried to lace my skates. Edward laughed and laced them up for me, making them nice and tight. He laced up his own skates and we linked arms, walking slowly to the ice rink. "Do you know what you're doing?"

"A bit," Edward smirked. He stepped onto the ice and turned around, holding his arms out for me. I arched a brow and stepped onto the ice, praying that I wouldn't fall. I clasped my hands in Edward's and he pulled me into the center of the ice. "You okay?"

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"Peachy keen, jelly bean," I snorted. "I'm going to put this pointy think in Alice's ass."

"It's called a toe pick, Bella," Edward laughed.

"And you know that because?" I asked.

"I also took lessons. I wanted to play hockey, but Esme wanted me to try figure skating first to get my bearings first. I was also pretty good, then I went through a growth spurt. My center of gravity got all jacked up and I quit," Edward explained.

"So you can twist and turn in the air, too?" I asked.

"Probably not anymore. I haven't done this since I was fourteen. I know enough to go backwards and forwards. Not jumping or turning like my pixie sister," Edward said, nodding toward Alice. She was gliding along the ice, preparing for some sort of jump. She hopped up and rotated in the air, landing easily on her right leg. "I think Esme had visions of Alice and I being the first pairs skaters to win a gold medal for the United States in the Olympics."

"So, you used to know how to do that?" I squeaked.

Edward nodded and shrugged. "I probably could do it again if I had my own skates. These are cheap and the blades are a joke."

"Can you show me something that you can do with these skates? Please?" I begged. I jutted out my lip and gave him a puppy dog pout. "Pretty please?"

Edward sighed and took off his glasses. "Hold these, please." He turned around and skated backwards, gaining some momentum. He twisted his body and began doing a spin, crouching down into a seated-like position. He then switched legs, still in the seated position. He switched legs again and got back to his full height and he drew his arms in until they were above his head, spinning faster. His body stopped moving and he extended his arms, putting his own toe pick into the ice. He turned and looked at me, giving me a crooked

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smirk. "That's about all I can do with what I've got."

"Fuck me. Edward, that was awesome," I squealed as I started bouncing. I forgot I was on the ice and I slipped and fell, right on my ass. "Ouch!"

Edward glided over to me and put his hands on his knees. "Obviously, you will not be my partner if I decide to go for the Olympics," he laughed. I rolled my eyes and handed him his glasses. He put them back on and held out his hands and easily hefted me from the ice. "Come on, Sasha Cohen, let's show you how to move forwards without hurting yourself."

We skated for about an hour. We eventually stopped until Emmett took a nasty spill. He was trying to do a spin like Edward and he ended up injuring his knee that he jacked up when he was in football. Before we left, Alice gave the DJ who was playing music a song that she wanted to hear. He obliged her and asked the rink to be cleared. We all watched as Alice began a routine the "The Mask of Zorro." She moved gracefully and seductively. I was amazed at how she was able to do this intricate routine on the ice, on thin blades of metal. She jumped and turned easily. She did intricate footwork, contorting her body. When the music was over, she landed her final pose and the entire crowd applauded for her. She bowed and skated off the ice, into Jasper's waiting arms.

After our trip to the ice rink, we headed back to the hotel. Alice called Amun and he arrived with the car. The guys helped Emmett into the car and we rode back in relative quiet, save for the soft jazz that was being pumped through the car. Edward and Jasper helped Emmett into his room. Edward told Emmett that if he couldn't walk that he needed to go to the emergency room. He insisted that he was fine and he just needed to ice and elevate.

Edward and I went up to our room and I pulled him into the bedroom. He was moving very stiffly and he seemed to be favoring his right leg. "Okay, Cullen. Take off your clothes," I said.

"You are not wasting any time," Edward laughed.

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"Get your mind out of the gutter, you perv. I'm giving you a massage. IF it leads elsewhere, then great! Take off your clothes and lay down on the bed, on your belly," I said. I went into the bathroom and grabbed the lotion that was on the counter. I removed my jewelry and placed it on the bedside table and scrambled onto the bed. Edward had taken off most of his clothes, except for his boxers. He grimaced as he crawled on to the bed and plopped down on a pillow. He took off his glasses and gave them to me. I put them next to my jewelry. I squirted some lotion into my hands and began massaging Edward's back. "Jeez! You are one huge knot."

"Waking up late, seeing my biological father, and ice skating can do that to a guy," Edward said, looking over his shoulder.

"Hmmm, perhaps we need to get you into the spa for a proper massage," I suggested as I focused my attention between his shoulder blades. "I can only do so much before I wimp out."

"We can do a couples massage," Edward sighed.

"I'll call the front desk and make an appointment," I said. I put some more lotion on my hands and straddled his legs. I leaned with my body weight on his lower back and I felt a pop. Edward groaned and he flopped his head down on the pillow. I ran my fingers along his spine, rubbing periodically along his back. He was breathing deeply and his eyes were closed. I moved further down his body and rubbed the backs of his thighs and his calves. They were just as knotted as his back. As I worked on Edward's legs, I heard the quiet snores of my fiancé. He was holding the pillow closely to his chest and his face was relaxed. I wiped off my hands and put my jewelry back on. I closed the lights and walked out to the living room. I went to Edward's laptop and did some searching for things for us to do while in Chicago. I really needed to keep him occupied. He would persevere over his father if I didn't.

I made a list of a few things that we would enjoy. I didn't want to make reservations for anything, so I chose things that we could just show up. However, there was one option that really piqued my interest. It was a dinner cruise on Lake Michigan on the Odyssey. I picked up my phone and called

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Alice. She picked up and she sounded out of breath.

"Hello?" Alice chirped.

"Hey, Ali. It's Bella," I said, wary of her response.

"Hola Bella. How's Edward?" she asked.

"He's taking a nap. Seeing his father really threw him for a loop and he's a bit stressed. I gave him a massage and he just crashed," I explained.

"That's good. So, what's up?"

"Do you guys want to go on a dinner cruise?" I asked. "It's on a ship called the Odyssey and it goes up and down the coast of Lake Michigan."

"Hell yeah! When are you thinking?" Alice replied.

"There's six tickets available on Thursday evening. Should I get them?"

"Do it. It'll be fun," Alice exclaimed. "We'll pay you back when we return from Chicago."

"Got it. I'll order the tickets and I'll see you later. Oh, you fucking rocked today on the ice!" I breathed. "Edward said that you were training for Nationals?"

"Yeah, but I tore my ACL. I never felt confident on my right foot, which happens to be my landing foot, after I had surgery. I can do piddly stuff, but nothing TOO demanding. Edward skated too. However, he was too tall. Or so he says," Alice laughed. "Do you want to go out tonight?"

"Probably not. I'm tired and as Edward is demonstrating, he's beat, too."

"Okay. We need to be at the courthouse by nine tomorrow. Do you want to meet at the same place for breakfast?"

"Sure. See you then," I said.

"Later, chica!"

I hung up the phone and ordered the tickets for the Odyssey dinner cruise. I used my debit card that Edward gave me as I knew we had enough money in there to cover the cost of the tickets. I also called down to the front desk and asked for transportation that evening. The concierge told me that Amun would be our driver and he would bring the limo.

I looked at the clock and saw that it was nearly seven in the evening. I padded to the bedroom, feeling my own stiffness from our escapades on the ice and checked on Edward. He was curled up, holding my pillow, snoring slightly. I crawled into the bed and lay down next to him. I traced the contours of his face with my finger tips. He sighed and rolled onto his back. I continued my caresses along his skin and his eyes fluttered. He blinked them open and rubbed the heel of his hand over his eyes. "Hey," he said, his voice rough with sleep. "How long was I out?"

"We got back around 4:30, so two hours or so. Did you get some good rest?" I asked as I snuggled against him.

"Yeah, I did. You have some magical fingers, my Bella. My muscles feel like jello. But in a good way. Thank you," Edward said as gently cupped my chin. "I love you."

"I love you, too, Edward." I said as I kissed his lips chastely.

I pulled away and he frowned. "No way. I want a *kiss*," he said forcefully. I smiled and put my fingers in his tousled hair, pulling his face to mine. I kissed his soft lips and traced them with my tongue. I rolled onto my back and Edward moved my leg over his hips. He settled between my legs and he fisted his hands into my long hair. Our lips moved in tandem. His tongue entered my mouth when I sighed and I moved my hands down his back to his ass. He rocked his hips and I felt his erection press against my jean-covered core. "Bella," he sighed.

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"What, Edward?" I asked as I moved my mouth from his, kissing along his stubbled jaw.

"I want you, Bella," Edward said as he pulled away from me. His deep jade eyes penetrated mine and they were filled with lust. I know my looks mirrored his and I smiled seductively. He reached for the hem of my sweater and he pulled it off my body, tossing it over his shoulder. "You're wearing too many clothes, Bella."

I arched a brow and reached behind my body, unclasping the black bra that I was wearing. Edward reached down my torso and unbuttoned my jeans. I lay back and arched my hips up off the bed as Edward removed my jeans and panties with one fowl swoop. After my clothing was effectively removed, I reached for his boxers and pushed down over his hips and he kicked them off the rest of the way. He lay down, pinning me with his hips and his eyes were piercing into mine. I traced his face and he arched a brow. I pulled his face down to mine and we gently kissed each other. We kept kissing until we both needed to breathe. However, Edward's lips never left my skin. He moved down my neck and to the swell of my breasts. His soft hands moved and cupped my boobs and he groaned as he pulled my nipple into his mouth. I could feel myself get more turned on as he continued his assault on my chest with his tongue and his teeth. He moved his lips further down my body, swirling over my navel. I arched my back and moaned. He looked up at me and there was playfulness in his eyes.

He moved back up my body and his lips crashed against mine. His hand moved down my torso and in between my legs. His fingers reached the apex of my thighs and he gently caressed my sensitive nub. I sighed against his lips and he thrust two fingers into my core. His hand moved erotically in my body. I wanted more. I wanted him. "Edward," I moaned. He chuckled against my skin and he sucked on my neck. His finger curved in my body and I reacted.

Edward removed his fingers and he looked at me, his forest green eyes gazing down at me with adoration. He nudged my legs apart and eased his engorged cock into my body. He groaned and started to pump into me.



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"You are so perfect, Bella," he breathed. I reached for his hands and he laced his fingers with mine. His body was flush with mine and it felt so good to be so close to him. He peppered my face with kisses. I nibbled on his earlobe, breathing heavily. "I love you, so much, my Bella."

"I love you, more, Edward," I gasped. "I need you." Edward smiled against my skin and he moved faster in and out of my body. He grabbed one of my legs and laid it over his shoulder. He drove into me deeper, harder and I could feel my body respond to his actions. I reached between us and I gently circled my clit with my fingers as he pumped into me. "So close."

"Let go for me, Bella. I need to feel you come," he grunted. "You are so beautiful when you come." He laid his hands on either side of my head and moved faster in my body. My muscles began to flutter around him and I saw his look of ecstasy on his face. He was close too. Edward's eyes met mine and he leaned down to kiss me. He drew my bottom lip into his teeth and he swiveled his hips. I gasped and my body clamped down around his cock. I arched my back and rode out my orgasm. Edward spilled into me a few thrusts after my own explosion and he collapsed on top of me. "Holy shit."

I lowered my leg and ran my fingers along his sweaty back. "Feel good, Edward?"

Unable to speak, he just nodded. He was breathing heavily and he wasn't moving. I didn't mind. I always felt so safe with him close to me. We were still connected in the most intimate of ways and I didn't want to lose that connection to him. Edward eventually pulled away and lay on his side facing me. "Can we talk?"

"That never sounds good," I teased.

"About my sperm donor," Edward chided. "I need to you to know more about him. I need to talk about him. Sort of to psych myself out in order to see again tomorrow."

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"Of course, Edward. I'm always here for you," I said, ruffling his hair. He smiled wistfully and pulled me to his chest, holding me tightly. He took a few shaky breaths and covered our naked bodies.

"I'm certain that Esme told you about he and mom and how they met, right?" Edward asked.

"They met at Esme and Carlisle's wedding," I answered.

Edward nodded and he took another deep breath. "They were very much in love. He had just finished law school. He spent some time in the military before going to college. They ended up getting married a short time after meeting. My real parents were soul mates. However, my mom was ready for a child. My father was not. Technically, I was an 'oops' baby. The condom broke. Nine months later, out pops me."

"Your parents loved you," I said.

"My mom did. But I never really felt it from my father. He was always distant toward me. He did the 'fatherly' things like teach me how to throw a ball, how to ride a bike and how to 'be a man,' but he did it out of obligation, not true love. My connection was to my mom. I'll admit it, I was a 'mama's boy.' I would have done anything for her. Still would," Edward sighed. "I would have taken the cancer from her and given it to me if it meant that she would still be alive. However, life doesn't work that way."

"What happened after she died, Edward?" I asked.

"My father fell apart. Carlisle and Esme had moved back to the Chicago area when they found out that my mom was sick. They helped out as she grew weaker and eventually passed away. I found her. I was bringing her breakfast and she was so cold. She died sometime during the night. She was clutching one of my toys as she died," Edward said quietly, tears falling down his cheeks. I wiped the away and laced my fingers with his, placing his hand over my heart. He smiled and kissed my forehead. "You always know what I need, Bella. You are so much like her. It's like you are the reincarnation of my mom."

However, that would be weird."

I laughed quietly and nodded. "Just a smidge."

He blew out a breath and pulled me tighter to his body. He was trembling. "After she died and after the burial, my father threw himself back into to work during the day and drinking himself stupid at night. I was off for the summer as she died right before my tenth birthday. I spent my days with Esme and Carlisle. I bawled when I was supposed to go home after dinner. I never wanted to be with *him* all alone. He never hit me, never did anything to intentionally hurt me, but he ignored me. He loved his bottle of Grey Goose more than he loved me. I stepped up and did the cooking for dinner. He wouldn't. He was happy to drink his dinner. The pantry was always stocked, thanks to Esme. I shopped with her and I made sure I got things that I could make. She frowned as I went through the store, picking up Easy Mac and other simple dishes. However, she never questioned me. She did insist that I spend more time with her and Carlisle in the evenings after that day in the grocery store.

"Unfortunately, Esme had to go away on business and Carlisle was at a medical conference. It was in late September. I was left alone with *him* for two weeks. I did my best to ration the meager food that was in the pantry. He was asked to take a medical leave as he was not doing well at work. He slept all day and drank all night. I asked him one day if he could go to the grocery store before I left for school. He looked at me and backhanded me. I flew into the coffee table, bawling. He had hit me. He told me to 'deal with it' and he stumbled back upstairs. I went to school and retreated into myself. When I got home from school, all of the food was gone. He had trashed the pantry and emptied the fridge. He was passed out in the middle of the kitchen, bottle in hand. I went to bed with my stomach growling. I tried calling Esme and Carlisle, but their phones went straight to voicemail. I called all night, leaving message after message.

"I got up the next morning and found *him* in the kitchen, still passed out. I looked through his pockets and found his wallet. I took out some money and went to school, using the money to buy my lunch. That was the only meal I ate

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for those two weeks. I made that money last as long as I could, buying only the bare minimum to prevent me from passing out. I was too proud and too stubborn to ask for help from my teachers and my friends. Esme called every night after that first night and asked how I was doing. I lied and said that everything was fine, when it wasn't. I didn't want her to get in trouble and lose her job because of me. I never felt more lonely or more scared."

"Edward, I can't imagine what it was like to go through that," I said, tears falling down my cheeks. "You were so young to deal with all of that."

"I was ten and had more coping mechanisms than my thirty-five year old father. Eventually, I was too weak to go to school. *He* was passed out on the couch and wouldn't call the school to say I was sick. So, I stayed home, hiding in my room. I was sleeping on my bed and I heard the door open up. Esme shrieked and I heard them argue. She stomped up the stairs and found me huddled in my blankets, running a fever and painfully thin. I saw her as my own personal angel and she fell to her knees, holding me in her arms. I never missed my mom so much, but was so thankful that Esme was there. She put me on the bed and grabbed a suitcase from the hallway. She began throwing in all of my clothes. She asked me if I wanted to bring anything else with me. I grabbed my stuffed toy that my mom held as she died, a blue rabbit. His name was 'Rapoo.' I also grabbed all of her music books and the picture of the two of us. She put all of the things into the suitcase and set me on the bed. She told me to wait there and she lugged the bag down the stairs. I heard her yell at *him* again and he groaned. She returned and picked me up in her arms. I protested. I thought I was too heavy for her, but I knew I couldn't walk. I was too tired and too hungry.

"She carried me down the stairs and for the first time, I saw Edward Masen's true colors. He was standing tall and his eyes were flashing with hatred and anger. I cowered into Esme's chest and he told her to leave and never return. He looked at me and sneered. Tears fell and I was all alone. Truly an orphan. My mother was dead. The one person who loved me unconditionally. My father never wanted me and hated me for it.

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"Esme sat me down on the piano bench, brushing my shaggy hair from my face and she hit *him* so hard. He stumbled and fell onto the coffee table, breaking it into a million pieces. He looked up at her with surprise. She turned on her heel and picked me up. I wrapped my arms around her neck and buried my face into her hair. I bawled and she carried me to the car. She deposited me into the backseat and called Carlisle. He was home when we got to their place and he examined me. He insisted that I be brought to the hospital to get an IV as I was very dehydrated and malnourished. Esme agreed and I was admitted for two days. By the end of the week, I was no longer Edward Masen, Jr. I was Edward Cullen. Carlisle and Esme, upon hearing my father was terminating his parental rights, rushed through the adoption process. In my mother's will, I was to be in their custody if anything happened to both of them. The judge expedited the process and I was theirs. We moved to New York by the following summer and I had a sister. Other than a birthday card, I never heard from my father. He is paying for my college education, but Carlisle told me that *he* insisted on it. I really wished he hadn't. Probably my college education is being paid with blood money. He is the lawyer to the scum of the earth."

"Edward, I had no idea," I whispered. "Your reaction makes so much more sense to me now."

"After my half-hearted suicide attempt, I spent about a year and half in therapy. The first six months in Chicago and the rest of it in New York. With my therapist, I worked through my abandonment issues and my hatred for my father. I will never love him and I know he will never love me. Suffice it to say, he isn't getting a wedding invitation," Edward joked.

"I wouldn't want him there. I'd haul off and kick his ass. What a prick," I mumbled. "You are not like him at all. The only things that I see about you that are similar to him are purely physical. You have his stature and build. You do not have any of his mental attributes, thank goodness."

"Yeah, I don't think I could be a prick if I tried. Esme always said that I had my mother's heart but his brain. He's a genius too. However, it's the combination that made me special," Edward mused.

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"You are. Very special," I said to him. "You are the most special person to me. Most important person."

He leaned in and kissed me. "Thank you."

"You're welcome," I replied. "There is one thing I do want you to know."

"What's that?" Edward asked, arching a brow.

"Esme is the best person ever. She is my hero," I smiled. "I would have paid money to see her hit your dad and seeing him sprawled out on the coffee table."

"It was pretty sweet," Edward chuckled. "I was too delirious to realize the implications, but I was never more proud of her. I wish I had the balls to do it to him. Maybe I'll get my chance while I'm here."

"Just don't get arrested," I teased.

"I promise. I won't," Edward said rolling his eyes. His stomach growled and he blushed.

"Time to feed you, Edward," I giggled. I grabbed the phone and the room service menu, placing an order. We ate in bed, gorging ourselves on the food that we ordered. We then got a pay-per-view movie and watched that until we both dozed off.

xx LC xx

The alarm went off early and I climbed out of bed. Edward was still curled around my pillow and he looked more relaxed than he did yesterday. I let him sleep and padded to the bathroom. I took a quick shower and curled my hair. I grabbed my clothes for today: a charcoal grey skirt, pale blue blouse and my heels and got dressed. I clipped my hair back and applied a light coating of makeup. I sprayed my body with some perfume and woke up sleeping handsome.

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I sat down on the edge of the bed and wrapped my arms around his waist, laying my head against his shoulder. "Edward?" I sang.

"HMMMMMMMMMMmph," he grumbled.

"Wake up, baby," I cooed as I kissed his shoulder blade. "We're meeting everyone for breakfast in about a half hour."

He groaned and pulled a pillow over his head. I chuckled and pulled the blankets off his body and smacked his bare ass. "Get up, lazy bones!"

"Fuck me, Bella," he barked as he grabbed his butt. "That was not nice."

"You wouldn't move. Up!" I said as I poked his sides.

"Okay, Bella. Stop it or we're going to have issues," Edward warned as he turned over to look at me. "Fuck me. You look hot, woman."

"I know," I said, tossing my hair over my shoulder.

"I think someone told me when they first met me that 'humility is a good thing,'" Edward joked as he tweaked my nose. He got up and strode to the bathroom. I watched my gorgeous and naked fiancé, trying to contain my drool. I shook my head and went into the living room, carrying our plates from our dinner in bed. I placed them on the table and grabbed my purse and book for today. I sat down in the living room, waiting for Edward. I read a few pages in my book when he walked out into the living room, wearing a pair of black dress slacks, dark blue dress shirt and a blue and black tie. I licked my lips and willed myself to not jump him. "Bella, you're ogling."

"I know. You look hot, too," I said simply.

"I know," he retorted, mimicking me as he tossed his head back.

"Jackass," I grumbled.

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"But you love me," he said, fluttering his eye lids.

"I guess," I sighed.

Edward put his wallet, phone and key into his pockets and picked up his leather jacket. He put his glasses on and looked at me expectantly. "You ready?"

"Yep," I said as I got up from the couch. He held up my coat and placed it over my shoulders. He looked more relaxed, more at peace at what faced him today. "You're going to be fine."

"I will. As long as I have you, I will," Edward said confidently. "Thank you for everything, Bella. I love you."

"As I love you, Edward," I said as I stood on my tiptoes, brushing my lips against his. He picked me up and held me close to his body. He deepened the kiss momentarily and placed me back on my feet.

"Let's go," he said as he laced his fingers with mine. We rode down the elevator and walked out into the lobby. We were nearly to the door when I heard a familiar voice.

"Edward?"

**A/N: Cliffy...sorry. All will be revealed in the next chapter. Please leave some love!**



# Courtroom Drama and Pampering

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*This chapter has to do with Rose's rape and has some pretty graphic descriptions. I'm not a lawyer and do not pretend to be one. There are probably inaccuracies in this chapter, but remember that this is a work of fiction. I apologize to any lawyers who find my take on a courtroom to be wrong. And I'll step off my soap box :)*

## Chapter 81: Courtroom Drama and Pampering

### EPOV

"Edward?"

I turned around and saw the face of my father. He looked contrite and old. I pulled Bella behind me and growled. "What do you want?" I snapped.

"I want to talk," he said.

"Too late, old man. I'm not interested," I seethed. "Come on, Bella."

Bella turned around and I followed her through the lobby. I felt a hand on my shoulder. "I'm still your father, Edward," he said forcefully. "You should respect me."

I turned around and coiled my hand into a fist. Using my body weight, I clocked him in the jaw. "You don't deserve it," I fumed. "You are NOT my father. You gave up that right ten years ago when you signed over your parental rights."

## La Cantante

"I should press charges, you ungrateful brat," he said as he rubbed his chin.

"Go ahead. I don't care," I spat. He glared at me and his eyes narrowed. Bella put her tiny hand in mine and tugged on it. I looked down at her and her eyes were sad. I took a deep breath and caressed her cheek. I kissed her forehead and looked at my sperm donor. "I'm not your son. Don't talk to me. Don't find me. Just forget I've ever existed."

I turned on my heel and strode out the door, dragging Bella with me. We walked to the restaurant and I could feel my insides crumble. Bella stopped me before we got into the restaurant and she pushed me into a small coffee shop. We found a corner booth and sat down. She pulled me into her arms and I fell apart. I cried into her fragrant hair and held her tightly to my body. She didn't say anything, she just held me. After a few moments, I pulled away from Bella and removed my glasses, wiping my eyes. "I'm sorry, Bella."

"Why are you apologizing, Edward? You did nothing wrong," she said comfortingly.

"I'm a mess," I said with a sad smile.

"I would be, too," she said, caressing my damp cheek. "I know you can do this. Carlisle and Esme love you. I love you. Alice loves you. Jasper loves you. Emmett loves you, though he won't admit it."

I chuckled and put my glasses back on my face. "I don't know what I would do without you, Bella."

"Probably the same thing I would do without you, Edward," she teased. "Are you alright?"

"Yeah. I'll be fine," I replied. "Let's get some breakfast."

Bella nodded and tugged on my hand. We got up and walked to the restaurant where our friends were waiting. Rose looked nervous and Emmett was trying to comfort her. She was going to be on the stand today, testifying against

## La Cantante

Royce. Alice looked at me and she gave me a sad smile before wrapping her arms around my waist. I returned her hug and kissed her head. We sat down and placed an order. The food was brought out and we ate it quickly. The trial was going to resume at 9:30 today.

I hailed a cab and we all got in. The cabbie drove us to the courthouse and we went into the courtroom. Rebecca called Rosalie up to the table and they discussed quietly. I sat down next to Bella and laced my fingers with hers. She kissed my lips gently and gave me comfort. I relished in her support and leaned on her strength. I knew I needed to pull it together, for myself and for Rosalie. My father strode in with a flourish a few minutes before the trial was to begin. He ignored me, like I asked. I was grateful for that. I couldn't handle anymore of his hateful stares. He set up his table and the bailiff brought in Royce.

The judge entered the courtroom and reminded us about being respectful in the courtroom. The jury was led in and the judge turned to the prosecutors and asked them to call up the first witness.

"The prosecution calls Ms. Rosalie Hale," Rebecca said firmly.

Rose stood up and took a breath. She walked confidently to the witness stand and waited for the court reporter to approach her. She held out a Bible and asked her to place her right hand on it and raise her left. "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?"

"I do," Rose answered.

"Please be seated."

Rose sat down and looked at the prosecution. Rebecca approached her and stood directly in the line of sight of Royce. "Please state your full name for us."

"My name is Rosalie Lillian Hale."

"How old are you, Ms. Hale?" Rebecca asked.

## La Cantante

"I'm 20. I'm turning 21 in May."

"Can you please describe your relationship to Mr. King? When did it begin?"

"We met in the fall of 2009. I was a member of a sorority and he was in the fraternity that we were paired up with," Rose said quietly.

"When did you start dating?" Rebecca questioned.

"We had our first date after the Halloween party that was hosted by our fraternity and sorority. Our relationship grew from there."

"Where you physically intimate with Mr. King?"

"Not at first. I was not experienced and I wanted to take it slowly. He was patient, in the beginning. However, his patience waned as our relationship progressed," Rose explained.

"Describe what he sent you for Christmas in 2009," Rebecca demanded.

"He sent me a box full of sex toys and racy lingerie. I was appalled at what he sent me and I told him as such. He apologized and sent me another gift of a pendant."

"When you returned from your Christmas break, what happened then?"

"Royce was very distant. He didn't want to hang out. I called him on it and he said that I was leading him on. I did no such thing and I broke it off with him. He was not happy but respected my wishes."

"Did you see him around campus? After your breakup?"

"Yeah. He just ignored me," Rose said as she glanced at Royce.

"Were you asked to do anything with the sorority or fraternity with him after that?" Rebecca inquired.

## La Cantante

"We were asked to do a March Madness party. I declined as I distanced myself from the whole sorority thing after our breakup. On the day of the party, Royce came to my dorm, saying he was going to escort me," Rose muttered.

"What happened after that?"

"I told him that he didn't need to, but he grabbed my arm and pulled me out of the room. He laced his fingers with mine and we walked through the dorm, heading downstairs. I went along, but I knew that something wasn't right."

"Did he take you to the party?" Rebecca asked.

"No. He didn't," Rose mumbled.

"What did he do?"

"Objection. Leading the witness," my father barked.

"I'll rephrase, Mr. Masen. Where did Mr. King take you?" Rebecca asked.

"He took me to a secluded area near the sorority and fraternity. I could hear several voices. They were the voices of his fraternity brothers."

"What happened at this secluded area, Ms. Hale?"

"Royce pushed me to the ground and he ripped my clothes from my body," Rose cried. "He...he...forced himself into me and he raped me. Then, his brothers took turns with me. They all raped me. Not with just their penises either. They used other things too. Metal pipes and pieces of wood. They did it for hours, it seemed."

"Did you go to the hospital?" Rebecca questioned quietly, handing Rose a Kleenex.

"Yes. I was examined and had several pictures taken while I was there."

## La Cantante

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, these are the pictures Ms. Hale speaks of. They are marked as peoples evidence A," Rebecca said as she turned on a television. The pictures were of Rose's face, body, and vagina. I looked away, saddened at what he did to her. He was an animal. His brothers were animals. Bella and Alice were crying, as was Emmett. Jasper comforted Alice and he had a murderous look in his eyes. "Can you describe your injuries?"

"I had severe tearing of the vaginal walls. I had splinters all along my anus and vagina as well. I had scarring on my cervix and it's highly unlikely that I'll be able to get pregnant because of the damage done to my uterus, cervix and vagina. In addition to the rape, I also had a broken cheek bone, several broken ribs and many deep contusions all over my body from the attack."

Rebecca smiled at Rose and gently patted her hand. "No further questions."

"Mr. Masen?" Judge McAfee barked.

"Ms. Hale, Rosalie. Can I call you Rosalie?" my father asked.

"No," Rose said coldly.

"Fine, Ms. Hale. You said that you broke up with Mr. King, correct?"

"Yes."

"Did you love him?"

"I thought I did, before he turned into a sex fiend," Rose snapped.

"Had he shown any indication that he was 'sex fiend' to you prior to your alleged attack?" my father asked smoothly.

"My Christmas present," Rose said succinctly.

"Anything else?"

## La Cantante

"He always tried to push me into doing things I wasn't comfortable doing. I told him so, but he still pushed."

"Did you comply with his 'pushing,' Ms. Hale?"

"At first, but when his requests became more uncomfortable, I began saying no. He would become frustrated and still try to force me," Rose said, fire in her eyes.

"Did you enjoy the things you did with Mr. King? Did he make you feel good?"

"Sometimes. When he started foisting himself on me, then it didn't feel good at all," Rose seethed.

"Are you a virgin, Ms. Hale?"

"Not anymore," Rose grumbled.

"How did you lose your virginity?"

"Ask your client. He took it from me when he raped me," Rose snapped.

"Allegedly," my father said as an afterthought. "No further questions."

"Redirect, Ms. Caulfield?" Judge McAfee asked.

"Yes, your honor. Ms. Hale, did the doctors at the hospital say if there was any physical evidence of your rape?"

"Yes, they did. There was evidence of semen in my rape kit," Rose answered.

"I'd like to admit people's evidence B, Ms. Hale's rape kit. In the kit, it shows five distinct genetic profiles. How many attackers were there?"

"Five. Royce and four of his fraternity brothers," Rose answered.

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"Thank you, Ms. Hale," Rebecca said kindly. "I have no further questions. You can step down."

Rose nodded and stood up shakily. She walked back to our bench and sat down next to Emmett, laying her head on his shoulder. He held her tightly and she crumbled against his chest. I looked toward my father and gave him a glare. He was talking to Royce who was smiling smugly.

"Next witness, Ms. Caulfield?" Judge McAfee barked.

"Prosecution calls Detective Mark Elliot."

A young detective stood up and he walked to the stand. He raised his hand and swore to tell the truth. He sat down, unbuttoning his poorly fitted suit. He had shaggy blond hair and deep brown eyes. He gave Rose a sympathetic smile and he turned his attention to Rebecca.

"Mr. Elliot, you were the detective assigned to this case. Can you please explain why?" Rebecca asked.

"I work in the Special Victims division of the Chicago Police Force. We deal with cases that include child molesters and rapists. In Ms. Hale's case, we got a hit on a genetic profile of four other open rape cases," Detective Elliot explained.

"How did you know that it was Mr. King?" Rebecca questioned.

"Ms. Hale told me that she knew her attackers and we arrested all of them. We compelled them to give us a DNA sample through a warrant and Mr. King's DNA was linked to those four other cases."

"What happened to the other victims in the other cases?"

"Two of the women committed suicide. One of them refused to press charges and the last one is testifying in this case," Detective Elliot said.



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"No further questions. Your witness, Mr. Masen."

My father sneered at Ms. Caulfield and looked at the detective. "How did you link my client to the other cases, other than his DNA?"

"I interviewed each of the victims and they described a tall, fit, blonde man. They also described a tattoo on his thigh that could only be seen if they saw his body. In addition to his DNA, the physical description and the tattoo indicates that it was your client."

"It could be anybody, Mr. Elliott. It could have been my client. It could be that man in the audience," he said pointing to Jasper. "It could be you."

"It wasn't, Mr. Masen. The DNA proved that."

"Supposedly," my father smirked. "No further questions."

"Redirect, Ms Caulfield?"

"No, your honor."

"We're going to take an hour recess. Please be back here by one," Judge McAfee said. She stood up and exited the courtroom into her chambers.

Rebecca came up to Rose and gave her a hug. "You don't need to be here anymore. If we need you, we'll call you. How long are you going to be in Chicago?"

"I'm staying until the end of the week. I'll probably be back this afternoon, but my friends will probably explore the city," Rose said. "I feel like a weight has been lifted from my chest. I'm so thankful this is almost over."

Rebecca hugged her again and gathered her things. My father and Royce were hissing at each other. My father looked distressed and Royce was glaring at him. *My dad's losing his touch. Good. I hope he loses. Hateful bastard.*

## La Cantante

We exited the courtroom and headed to a deli across the way from the courthouse. We sat down and placed our orders. Rose said that she didn't want us to waste our spring break in a courtroom. She wanted us to have fun in Chicago. Bella then told us that she got us tickets on the Odyssey for Thursday. Alice gave her a knowing smile and I knew that they both had something to do with that. Alice then told us that she got us tickets for *Spring Awakening* on Wednesday.

Rose shooed us out of the courthouse and pretty much begged us to have a good time. Emmett was going to stay with her and the rest of us were going to head back to the hotel. I suggested that we go to Lincoln Park Zoo for the afternoon. I called down to the front desk and asked what the best way would be to go to Lincoln Park Zoo. The concierge offered a complimentary vehicle for us to use, but I declined it. I was not comfortable driving in a city that I was not familiar with. Well, I was familiar with it, but not driving. I was ten when I was last in Chicago. She then offered to have us driven up there and I acquiesced to that. We headed down to the lobby and our faithful driver, Amun, was standing there with a smile.

We loaded up into the Acura SUV and he drove us to the Lincoln Park Zoo. He reminded me of his cell phone number and for us to call him when we were ready for pick up. I told him that we were going to go to dinner after our jaunt at the zoo at a fondue restaurant called Gejas. Amun told me to call when we were done with the main course and he'd be waiting for us outside when we were done with our dinner.

We walked around the zoo for a few hours. Alice and Bella were chattering in front of us. Jasper was uncharacteristically quiet. "What's up, Jas?"

"I can't believe that Rose went through that. Did you see those pictures? Royce is an animal," Jasper seethed.

"I know. How anybody can do that to another person is sickening," I shuddered.

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"I hope he gets what's coming to him," Jasper said quietly. "If he doesn't, I'm certain that Rose will kill him. Hell, I'll kill him."

"Get in line," I chuckled darkly.

"How are you doing?" Jasper said, putting his arm around my shoulder.

"I told Bella about what my sperm donor did when my mom died," I sighed.

"What did he do? I know that he signed over his parental rights and all that, but what happened?" Jasper asked.

"About three months after my mom died, Esme and Carlisle were on business trips. I was home alone with him and I asked him to get food for us at the grocery store. I had stepped up to do the cooking as he didn't have a clue how to do it. He was also on medical leave. He was having a nervous breakdown. Anyhow, I asked him to get food and he backhanded me. I went to school and when I got back, he was passed out on the floor and the pantry was empty as was the fridge. For the next two weeks, I survived on mediocre school lunches from a twenty I swiped from his wallet. One day, I was feeling sick and I couldn't go to school. I was dehydrated and malnourished. Esme found me in my bedroom, delirious and she took me away."

"Fuck me," Jasper breathed. "How did your 'sperm donor' take it?"

"He told her to leave and never come back. She put me on the piano bench and slapped him. He fell, as he was trashed, into the coffee table. She picked me up and put me in the car, driving me away from that hell."

"I can't believe that he did that to you," Jasper whispered. "You were always reserved, perhaps a little sad, but I never expected that. You bounced back really well."

"Therapy helps," I laughed. "I always blamed myself for what he did, or rather, didn't do. However, I realized that he couldn't handle having me. I missed him and what my parents had, but was happy that I had my new family in Carlisle,

## La Cantante

Esme and Alice. And you're right. I was always reserved and sad. I kept up a pretty solid front. Bella made that wall crumble and for the first time since my mom's death, I'm truly happy."

"I bet it was hard seeing him in the courtroom yesterday. Well, it was hard. I found you puking in the bathroom," Jasper joked.

"Yeah, it was difficult, but I probably wouldn't have done as well without Bella's support or yours. Thank you, Jas. I really appreciate it."

"Not a problem, man. I hate to see you fall apart. You're like a brother to me and I wouldn't want to deal with that alone. If you ever want to talk, please, don't hesitate," Jasper said.

"Thanks," I said as I held out my fist. He bumped it and smiled.

"Edward! We have to see the penguins!" Alice squealed. "Come on you two!"

She came up to us and grabbed our hands, dragging us to the penguin exhibit. We roamed around the zoo until nightfall. Emmett texted us and asked us where we were having dinner. I replied that we were going to the fondue restaurant. He said that Rose and he would meet us there in an hour. We decided to head to the restaurant and wait for Rose and Emmett.

When we got to Gejas, our noses were assaulted with the most interesting smell. It wasn't unpleasant, just different. We waited outside for Rose and Emmett and they arrived shortly after we had walked to the restaurant. We were seated and placed our 'orders.' Dinner was an interesting affair, but a lot of fun. Emmett thoroughly enjoyed his plate of meat. I was gushing over the dessert course, as was Bella and Rose. Alice and Jasper were a bit disgusted as they picked at their meals. We headed back to the hotel after dinner as it was almost ten by the time we were done. Bella and I just crashed when we returned to our room, entangled in each other's embrace.

xx LC xx

## La Cantante

I woke up the next morning to an empty bed. I furrowed my brow and felt on Bella's side and found it to be cold. However, I did find a note on her pillow. I unfolded it and inside I saw her unique handwriting.

*Dearest Edward,*

*You were sleeping so soundly, I didn't have the heart to wake you. I know that the past few days have been traumatic for you, to say the least. You are always spoiling me and now it's my turn to reciprocate. When you wake up, head down to the spa downstairs for male 'pampering.' I've arranged a massage, some time in the sauna, and haircut (you're quite shaggy, Edward. It's time to cut the mop). When you're done, Alice and I have chosen your clothes and they are in the spa. Meet me in the lobby when you're finished with your day of relaxation. You deserve it.*

*I love you, il mio cantante .*

*Your Bella*

I smiled and got out of bed, stretching my stiff and sore muscles. I slipped on my glasses and saw that it was after noon. I padded to the bathroom and took a quick shower to hose myself off. I needed to get the stench of Gejas off my body and out of my hair. Afterward, I pulled on a pair of track pants and t-shirt and went down to the spa.

I checked in with the receptionist and she led me into a posh changing area. She instructed me to remove my clothes, except my boxers, and put on the robe. I changed and put on the robe. I walked out of the spa and was met with a young woman who led me to the sauna. She handed me a towel and opened the door for me. I crawled onto the bench and leaned back against the pliant wood in the steaming hot room. It felt so good on my muscles and my weary soul. I don't know how long I was sitting there, but an attendant poked their head in and said that my masseuse was ready for me. I nodded and followed her to another warm, fragrant room. A small woman was lighting some candles. She turned and gave me a friendly grin.

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"Hi, I'm Serina. I'm your masseuse for today. Why don't you remove your robe and lay face down on the table. I'll step out so you can get situated," she said. She skipped out of the room and shut the door. I put my robe on the chair and lay down in between the sheets. I listened to the quiet jazz that was playing and enjoyed the relaxing smells of the candles that were lit. Serina came back in and she gathered her supplies. "This is going to be a full body massage. If there is anything that you are not comfortable with, let me know okay?"

I nodded and gave her a smile. She instructed me to lay my head down on the table and she began working my muscles. It felt amazing. I thought that Bella had magical fingers. I was wrong. Serina was the queen of all that is massage. She worked my back muscles, focusing her attention in between my shoulder blades and lower back. She moved down my body and massaged my calves and thighs. She spent a great deal of time massaging my feet, which I found to be very ticklish. I squirmed and she chuckled. She changed her technique and it didn't tickle anymore. Serina then instructed me to flip over, facing up. I did as she asked and she massaged my arms, chest and legs. When she was done, I was a ball of goo. I couldn't move and I was so relaxed.

"All done," Serina said quietly. "How are you feeling?"

"Like jelly," I laughed.

"That was the aim. You're free to head back into the changing room to get dressed whenever you're ready. Your stylist is meeting you there. It was a pleasure working with you. I hope to see you soon," Serina said as she held out her hand. I shook it and she left the room. I pulled on my robe and walked back to the changing room. Inside there was a garment bag with my name on it. I opened it and saw my clothes and a note from my sister.

*Dearest Brother,*

*Here's your clothes for your big date with Bella tonight. I picked them up while you were getting relaxed. When you're done with your haircut, put these on and wait for Bella in the lobby. I love you, big brother!*

*Love, Pixie*

I chuckled and put on my original clothing to get my hair cut. I was also getting a true shave with a real razor. I had never gotten that done and I was excited. Carlisle has had it done before and he said it's the closest shave he's ever gotten. I walked out into the lobby and was greeted by a small man.

"Hi! I'm Gus and I'm your hair stylist today," he said in an a very effeminate voice. "Edward, right?"

"Yeah. Nice to meet you," I said, holding out my hand.

"You're gorgeous," Gus gushed. "Sorry. My filter is not functioning."

"Um, thanks?" I chuckled.

Gus blushed and led me into the salon to the wash station. He massaged my scalp, chattering about the latest hair cutting techniques and what he planned to do with me. After he washed and conditioned my hair, he brought me to his station, which was decked out with sequins and rhinestones. He sat me down and towel dried my hair. He ran his fingers through my hair and moaned.

"Your hair is so thick. Are these natural highlights?"

"I think so?" I answered, arching a brow.

"You've never dyed your hair?" he asked.

"No. Never," I replied.

"Lucky bitch," he grumbled. "I have to spend four hours in a salon getting this done." He ran his fingers through his spiky hair. "We're going to have fun."

"Please be kind," I said warily. "My hair has a tendency to have a mind of its own and I can look like Einstein."

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"Trust me, Edward. You will be hot. Men will be falling at your feet," he said as he laid a hand on my chest.

"Um, I'm straight," I blushed. "And engaged."

"Are you sure you don't want to switch teams? I've been told that I can sway men," Gus flirted.

"Nope. I'm good. Happy with my gorgeous fiancée," I said.

"Petite, brunette, deep chocolate eyes?" Gus asked.

"Yeah. Her name is Bella," I smiled.

"She came in and made your appointments this morning. She is quite lovely, for a woman. I can see why you're taken with her. However, if things don't work out with your fiancée and you want to..." Gus trailed off as he picked up a razor.

"I'll keep that in mind," I squeaked. "However, I'm good."

He winked at me in the mirror and began attacking my head with the razor. A short time later he finished the cut and pulled out a blow dryer. He finished drying my hair and he rubbed some product into my hair, styling it with his fingers. He finished the styling and he brought me to another station where I was going to get shaved. He prepped my skin with some moisturizer and then lathered my face with warm shaving cream. He picked up the razor and he gently ran it across my neck and jaw. I tensed up and Gus said he needed to me to relax. I tried and he finished my shave, putting some after shave. I stood up and he fussed over my hair a bit more and he deemed me ready to go. I reached into my pocket and handed Gus a tip. He waved it off, saying that my fiancée covered all of the costs for today. When his back was turned, I left a twenty on his bedazzled station. He was very gay and very forward but gave a good hair cut and my face was smooth as a baby's behind. Before I went into the changing room, I asked the receptionist for an envelope, placing a twenty in there for Serina, as I didn't have my wallet in my robe. I also asked the



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receptionist for my total and she said that it was all paid for. I knew that Bella didn't like using our joint checking account and this must have cost a good amount of money.

*I don't want to make her uncomfortable, but I would like to know how she pulled this off.*

I walked back into the changing room and unzipped the garment bag. Inside there was a pair of black pinstripe pants, a red shirt, black vest, black tie and a pocket watch. There was also a pair of black and white dress shoes, similar to what they would wear with a zoot suit. I arched a brow and pulled out the clothes. I put on the undershirt that was in there and slipped on the pants. They were cut perfectly, just for me.

*Not bad, Pixie.*

I pulled the shirt over my shoulders and buttoned it. I wrapped the tie around my neck and quickly tied it, leaving it loose at the top of the shirt. I weaved the pocket watch into the vest and pulled that over my shoulders. I slipped on my socks and the funky shoes and threw my clothes into the garment bag. My cologne was inside the bag and I sprayed myself with it. I looked in the mirror and I looked good. My hair was expertly coiffed and my sister chose an interesting outfit, but I liked it.

I grabbed my phone and wallet, placing them into my pockets of my pants. I picked up the garment bag and walked out of the changing area. The receptionist asked for my bag and she assured me that she would have it delivered to my room. As we exchanged the bag, I made sure to leave a tip for her as well. She reminded me that I needed to meet Bella out in the lobby. I smiled and thanked her as I left the spa.

I headed down to the lobby and I was nervous. I didn't know why, but I was. The elevator opened up to the lobby and I strode out to the main portion of the lobby. I noticed Bella near the door. Her back was to me and her hair was in pin curls, hanging down her back and over her shoulders. She had on a red dress that was flared at the waist and a pair of heels. She looked over her

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shoulder, not knowing I was there and I could see her biting her lip. She was nervous too. She shook it off quickly and turned around. She noticed me and her eyes widened. She looked beautiful. Her makeup was very retro with bright red lipstick. She put her hand on her hip and sashayed toward me. She put her arms around my neck and ran her fingers through my hair. "Did you enjoy your day of pampering, Edward?" she purred.

I snaked my arms around her waist, pulling her flush with my body. "Immensely, beautiful. You look exquisite," I said, kissing her lips chastely.

"So do you, handsome," she said as she ran her hand over my cheek. "So smooth."

"So, what's the plan for tonight, my love?" I asked.

"We're going out to dinner at the Hancock Observatory and then dancing," she said with a smirk. "On the dance floor and then in between the sheets."

"How about we skip dinner and the dancing and just go upstairs," I suggested, pulling her earlobe between my teeth. "You are far too tempting."

"Edward," she breathed. "We are going out. Come on, Amun is waiting."

I pouted and she moved her hand down my chest to my erection, gently stroking it. "Later, Edward. I promise. You won't know what hit you."

*Fuck me. Isabella Swan is going to be the death of me.*

**A/N: I wanted to update last night but I got a minor case of writers block. So, I stepped away for a day and came back refreshed. Up next will be dinner, dancing, lemonade and some more 'Masen' drama. Leave me love, please :)**

# Dancing and Senior

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*Wow! 400 reviews! I'm so stoked! Thank for everyone who has taken the time to read my story, La Cantante. I appreciate it very much!*

## Chapter 82: Dancing and Senior

### EPOV

*I headed down to the lobby and I was nervous. I didn't know why, but I was. The elevator opened up to the lobby and I strode out to the main portion of the lobby. I noticed Bella near the door. Her back was to me and her hair was in pin curls, hanging down her back and over her shoulders. She had on a red dress that was flared at the waist and a pair of heels. She looked over her shoulder, not knowing I was there and I could see her biting her lip. She was nervous too. She shook it off quickly and turned around. She noticed me and her eyes widened. She looked beautiful. Her makeup was very retro with bright red lipstick. She put her hand on her hip and sashayed toward me. She put her arms around my neck and ran her fingers through my hair. "Did you enjoy your day of pampering, Edward?" she purred.*

*I snaked my arms around her waist, pulling her flush with my body. "Immensely, beautiful. You look exquisite," I said, kissing her lips chastely.*

*"So do you, handsome," she said as she ran her hand over my cheek. "So smooth."*

*"So, what's the plan for tonight, my love?" I asked.*

## La Cantante

*"We're going out to dinner at the Hancock Observatory and then dancing," she said with a smirk. "On the dance floor and then in between the sheets."*

*"How about we skip dinner and the dancing and just go upstairs," I suggested, pulling her earlobe between my teeth. "You are far too tempting."*

*"Edward," she breathed. "We are going out. Come on, Amun is waiting."*

*I pouted and she moved her hand down my chest to my erection, gently stroking it. "Later, Edward. I promise. You won't know what hit you."*

### **BPOV**

Edward and I twined our fingers and we walked out the front door of the hotel. Amun opened the door to the limo and ushered us inside. I got in first, with Edward's help and he followed me. His eyes were locked on me the entire drive, filled with such love and appreciation. We didn't say much in the car. We just stared into each other's eyes. Edward's fingers gently grazed over my face and laced our fingers together. I tenderly ran my thumb over his strong hands and smiled at him, reveling in his adoration.

The limo stopped and Amun opened the door. We arrived at Hancock Building. Edward hopped out first and held out a hand for me. I managed to gracefully exit the car and we walked briskly to the door. We went to the elevators and rode them to the restaurant level. Alice pulled a few strings to get a reservation for tonight and I was grateful for her random connections. We arrived at the Signature Room on the 95th Floor, hovering over the beauty of Chicago. I walked up to the hostess and told her that we had a reservation under Cullen. She smiled and led us to a small secluded table near one of the windows in the restaurant. She handed us our menus and scampered away.

"How did you do this, Bella?" Edward asked, his eyes sparkling.

"Your sister helped. However, I wanted to surprise you with some pampering for a while and now seemed like the right time to do it," I blushed.

## La Cantante

"I am definitely surprised, Bella. This has been amazing. Thank you so much," Edward whispered as he laced his fingers with mine.

"I'm glad you are enjoying it, Edward," I smiled.

He gave me his signature crooked grin and he kissed my hand. Our waiter walked up to us and asked for our drink order. I got a diet coke and Edward stuck with water. Our server tried to sell the wine list but we refused.

*Being underage really sucks.*

"Back to how, Bella," Edward said as he arched a brow. "I know Alice helped, but *how*?"

"Edward, you spoil me. Tremendously. It's my turn to spoil you. I used part my reimbursement money from when my room was trashed to purchase our airline tickets. I had a large portion leftover from that check. So, this evening and your day at the spa is courtesy of Emerson University," I replied.

"Bella," Edward admonished. "I enjoy spoiling you. You deserve everything that I've given you and more. You don't need to show me or spend your money unnecessarily."

"It isn't unnecessarily, Edward. You've been through hell and back the past few days and you *needed* this. I've never seen you this distressed or disheveled since you've seen your father. You are always the picture of calm and cool," I said fervently. "Please, just accept this and enjoy it."

"You drive a hard bargain, Bella. I'll accept the spa stuff, but I'm paying for dinner and the rest of the evening," Edward chided.

I pouted and looked down at my fingers. "I really wanted to do this for you, Edward."

"You've done so much already, Bella. You've been there for me. Supported me and let me vent about my 'sperm donor.' You've loved me, unconditionally.

## La Cantante

You've given me so much in the past few days, I will forever be grateful. I love you, baby. So much," he whispered. "Please, let me take care of you now."

I look up into his evergreen eyes and they are beseeching me. I pull my lip into my teeth and quirk my brow. He knows he's won. His face turns up into a lopsided smirk and I nod. "I'm doing this under duress, Cullen."

He chuckles and picks up his menu. "What are you looking to get, my love?"

"I'm looking at the salmon," I answered. "You?"

"I haven't eaten much today so I'm probably the grilled filet of beef," Edward responded. "But I'm going to start with a cup of the lobster bisque."

"Sounds good," I said as I looked back at the menu. "I'm probably going to stick with a salad. Alice and I ate a pretty big lunch at Macy's."

Our server chose that moment to make his presence known. We gave him our dinner order and he scurried off to fill it. He returned a few moments later with Edward's soup and my salad along with refills for our drinks. "Have you talked to Rose?" Edward asked.

"Yeah. She came with us to Macy's this morning," I answered. "She needed a break from the trial and your father. I think she's going to kick his ass with his accusations and insinuations."

"I'll hold him down, the fucker," Edward seethed.

"Edward, I get your resentment and hatred toward him. I really do. However, all this anger toward him is not healthy. You are a kind-hearted man and it's disconcerting to see you this upset," I told him honestly.

"I was very angry when he abandoned me. I thought I was over it. I essentially was until I saw him again. You're right about harboring these feelings," Edward sighed. "Perhaps when we get back from Chicago, I'll contact my old therapist and schedule some meetings with her to work through these feelings."

## La Cantante

"I'm glad, Edward," I smiled. "You deserve happiness and if that happiness is with your father OUT of your life then I support you. No matter what. If you decide to welcome him back into your life, I'll question your sanity, but I'd still support you."

"Bella, trust me when I say this, he's never going to be a part of my life. I knew when Esme carried me out of that house when I was ten that he would never be in life ever again," Edward said.

"However, I'm curious. I wonder what he wanted at the hotel on Tuesday." I asked.

"I'm curious, too. But you know what curiosity did to the cat?" he teased.

I rolled my eyes and tucked into my salad. I really was curious about what Edward Masen wanted with my fiancé. Why was he so intent on talking to him yesterday morning? Did he want to apologize? Did he want to admit that he fucked up? If Edward Masen, Sr. really wanted to reconcile with his son, he would make an effort. Despite Edward's wishes otherwise. I shrugged off my thinking and smiled at Edward. He practically inhaled his soup. I handed over the remainder of my salad and he was practically licking the plate. "Jeez, Cullen. Hungry much?"

"Just a smidge," he teased, holding up his fingers a few centimeters apart. "I woke up around noon and pretty much headed down to the spa, like you requested. I didn't eat anything today except what I just inhaled."

"Christ on a cracker, Edward. You need to take care of yourself. I don't want you getting sick," I chastised.

"I was a little excited when I got your note and kind of forgot to eat," Edward laughed. "Besides, I've got some extra flab that needs to be worked off." He pinched at his sides and wrinkled his nose. "Someone I know is an amazing cook."

## La Cantante

"Edward, please. You are not fat. It's sickening how in shape you are," I giggled. "Six pack boy."

"Six pack boy? Lately it's been feeling like a keg," Edward snorted.

"Whatever, Cullen," I replied dryly.

Our waiter returned and he picked up our plates, replacing them with our dinners. It smelled and looked delicious. I cut off a portion of my salmon and placed it on the small side plate, giving it to Edward. He offered a piece of his steak but I declined. We finished our meals and enjoyed just being in each other's company. My phone chirped from my purse and I pulled it out. It was a text from Alice.

*Amun has picked us up and is dropping us off at the club. Meet you there - A*

*We're ordering dessert and then we're on our way - B*

*This is so much fun! Love you, Bella - A*

*Love you, too, Ali - B*

"Who are you texting, Bella?" Edward asked.

"Your sister. Thanking her for helping me with all of the arrangements," I answered. "What do you want for dessert?"

"You, covered in whipped cream and chocolate," Edward said seductively.

I pulled out the menu and scanned. "Hmmm...no. That's not an option on the menu. 'Bella a La Mode' is not a special," I teased.

"You're funny, Bella," he said sarcastically. "Hysterical."

"I know. I try," I said, smiling sweetly. "Seriously, what are you getting for dessert?"



## La Cantante

"Cashew Caramel Fudge Cake," Edward replied. "And an espresso. I'm tired and I need some energy."

"You said you slept until noon, Edward," I said.

"I hadn't been sleeping all that well while I've been here. Last night was the first good night's sleep I'd had in awhile. Once I've had my coffee, I'll be fine," he smirked. "How about you? What do you want for dessert?"

"Vanilla cheesecake," I responded. He pouted. "However, I wouldn't mind you dipped in chocolate. Yum!"

He leaned back in his chair and erupted in laughter. I couldn't help but join him in his fit of hysteria. His eyes sparkled, his face was radiant and his smile was wide and beaming. "I can't believe you, Bella."

"You love me," I sighed.

"I do. Very much, *il mio cantante*," he said with a wistful grin. "Thank you for everything today. I know I've said it before, but it means more to me than you can imagine."

We ordered our desserts and shared them with each other. I actually liked Edward's dessert more than mine and vice versa. We ended up switching.

Against my better judgment, Edward paid for our dinner. I scowled and rolled my eyes, but Edward looked at me sweetly as he signed the credit slip in his elegant signature. He wouldn't even let me see the bill so I could leave a tip. Grrrrr!

*Yes, I just growled.*

He offered his hand to me and we walked to the elevators, waving at the hostess as we left. She smiled and asked us to come back. We rode down to the main level and found Amun standing in front of the Hancock Building. He opened the car door and helped me into the limo. Edward followed and we

## La Cantante

settled into the luxurious car for the ride to the club.

In my research, er, Alice's research, we found a club for swing dancing. I knew that Edward enjoyed to dance and that was his preferred style of dancing. I remembered the look on his face when we were at homecoming, tossing Alice around like a rag doll. I knew he wanted to dance with me like that, but my not having any panties kind of prevented that. The rest of the group was going to be meeting us at the club and it was going to be a load of fun.

In the limo, Edward lay his head on my shoulder and I gently scratched his back. I kissed the crown of his head and inhaled deeply. His hair smelled so good and felt so soft against my cheek. Then again, Edward always smelled good. His scent was a combination of cologne, clean linen and something that was inherently Edward. Just being near him, smelling him made me feel safe and like I was 'home.'

"Are you smelling my hair, Bella?" Edward chortled.

"Yes. I don't know what Gus used, but it smells heavenly," I said nuzzling my cheek into his head.

"Yeah, Gus," Edward sighed. "He is the gay, male version of Alice. He would not stop hitting on me. He called me gorgeous."

"That's because you are, Edward. I think you are the most beautiful man I've ever seen. Greek Gods don't stand a chance when you're around," I said.

He sat up and gave me a look of disbelief. "Beautiful? Ah, no. I have my flaws," Edward said self deprecatingly.

"So do I and yet you insist that I'm perfect," I teased, poking him in the sides. "I'm far from it. You've seen me at my worst. Believe me."

"Bella, you have been through an intense and horrendous ordeal. No person should have to deal with what you were handed this year. I'm in awe of your strength and courage to handle what you did with such poise and grace. You

## La Cantante

and Rose are the strongest people I know," Edward said as he caressed my face. "Yes, you have imperfections. However those imperfections make you perfect for me. Does that make sense?"

Not trusting my voice, I nodded. "I feel the same way about you, Edward. I know that you were not abused or raped, but you were also placed in a situation that no child should ever have to deal with. You lost both your parents. One by cancer and the other by sheer stupidity. That could have broken you. But you didn't let it get you. You are also strong and brave and loving. You are amazing, Edward. I'm so lucky to have you and I love you with everything that I am," I whispered, tears spilling over my cheeks.

"Don't cry, Bella," he said, wiping my tears away. "I love you, my beautiful girl."

He leaned in and kissed both my cheeks. He pulled away and looked into my eyes, piercing into my soul with his loving gaze. He caressed my lips with his, never tearing his eyes away from mine and our kiss quickly deepened. My hands flew to his hair and I tangled my fingers in the soft strands. Edward wrapped his strong arms around my waist and drew me close to him. His tongue traced my lips and I granted him entrance. It slipped between my eager lips and he moaned quietly. He pulled away and kept his lips on my skin, gliding down my cheek and jaw. "Bella," he said passionately. I guided his face back to my lips and I brushed my lips against his. His fingers twisted in my long hair and I could feel his excitement between us.

We were so caught up in our little bubble of passion that we didn't feel the car stop and the door slam. Amun opened up the back door of the limo and he quickly slammed it shut. We broke apart and blushed furiously. I looked at Edward and his lips were covered with my red lipstick. I grabbed some Kleenex and wiped his face down as I'm certain he didn't want to look like a clown. "I'm sorry, Edward," I said as worked to clean his face.

"Bella, I should be the one apologizing. I obviously have no self control," he chuckled. "Poor Amun."

## La Cantante

"At least we weren't having sex back here," I giggled.

"Perhaps on the car ride back," Edward suggested, wiggling his brows. I rolled my eyes and inspected his face. "No lipstick?"

"I think you're good," I answered. He smiled and looked around the limo. He found a mirror and did a quick inspection for himself and he winked. He opened the door and helped me out of the car.

Amun was standing off to the side of the car, looking sheepish. "I'm so sorry," Amun apologized. "I should have informed you that we were at our final location."

"Amun, it's fine," Edward laughed. "I just couldn't help myself. I mean look at her." Edward stepped behind me and wrapped his arms around my waist and nuzzled my neck. "We should apologize for acting inappropriately in the limo."

"If it's any consolation, that was tame compared to what I've seen," Amun chuckled. "The positions people can get in are shocking. Have fun tonight. Text me when you're ready to head back to the hotel."

"Thanks, Amun," I smiled.

We walked into the old theater and Edward paid our admission. Once again, I scowled and he pinched my ass. I squeaked and smacked his arm. He snaked his arm around my waist and we walked into the ballroom. Edward's eyes lit up as he heard the music pumping through the sound system. On the stage, a big band was setting up and they were tuning their instruments. There were many people, all dressed similarly to what we had on and Edward started bouncing like Alice. "Bella? Really?" he said, his face radiant.

"Alice found it. It's a club that sets up in different parts of the city during the week. I saw how you liked dancing with Alice at homecoming and I knew I wanted to go out with you and jitterbug with you," I smiled.

## La Cantante

Edward turned to me and picked me up, swinging me around. "Bella, you are the most wonderful woman I've ever known," he said, punctuating each word with a kiss. "I love you."

I giggled against his lips and returned his enthusiastic kisses. He set me back on my feet and looked around the ballroom. It was set up with red, white and black accents with a black dance floor. In the center of the dance floor was a treble clef in red. There were tables set up and couples were sitting around, drinking various themed beverages. I pulled on Edward's hand and we walked to the right of the dance floor. I saw Emmett and he waved at me. I smiled back and led Edward to the table that Emmett was at. Edward squeezed my hand and gave me a kiss on my cheek, thanking me for the perfect day.

We got to the table and Alice jumped up, giving both Edward and I a hug. "Change in plans, kids! I switched our tickets for *Spring Awakening* to Friday and tonight we're dancing. However, you all probably figured that out," Alice giggled. "Did you have fun today, Edward?"

"I did Alice. Thank you for helping Bella with arranging it," Edward smiled, kissing her cheek.

"Bella came up with the idea, but I just helped with my weird connections," she said as she patted my chest.

"How are you doing, Rose?" Edward asked.

"I'm good. The defense began their side this afternoon. I couldn't be there and I left. I'm probably going to stay away from the courtroom until they have closing arguments. If I stay in the courtroom, I will seriously cause damage to your dad, Edward."

"You won't get any argument from me, Rose. He's a prick," Edward bristled. "He's not worth your time, Rosalie." Edward let go of my waist and he walked to Rose. "I'm sorry for what he said to you, about you." He held out his arms and Rose accepted his proffered hug. I could hear her quiet sniffles.

## La Cantante

"Edward, thank you for your apology. However, it's unnecessary. You are not your father. You are good man and you have no need to apologize to me," Rose said into his chest. She kissed his cheek and gave him a watery smile.

"However, save me a dance, Edward. Emmett can't dance to save his life."

"You got it, Rose," Edward smiled.

"Hey! I can dance," Emmett protested.

"No, Em. You can't," I giggled. "Remember Rachel's wedding? My toes are still hurting."

"Oh, right. Sorry, Isabelly," Emmett laughed.

The band had finished setting up and introduced themselves. Edward's face lit up like a Christmas tree and he looked at me expectantly. We laced fingers and he led me to the dance floor. The rest of our group joined us on the dance floor. The band began playing "Sing, Sing, Sing," and Edward pulled me into a tight dance hold. He swayed us and allowed me to get into his groove. Out of the corner of my eyes, I saw Alice try to instruct Jasper in the stylings of swing dancing. Rose and Emmett were swaying like Edward and me. Edward then changed his hold on my hands and he pushed me away. He twisted and turned me in an intricate pattern and I just squealed. He moved me and led me to the beat of the music. His face was so bright with joy and he looked he was having so much fun.

Edward pulled me close, "Do you trust me?"

I looked at him and arched a brow. He smirked and he lifted me, angling my body to one side of his. I knew the lift he was doing with me and I moved with him. With his hands on my waist, he moved my legs to the other side of his body. The crowd had parted and we were in the center of a large circle. He bent down and easily lifted me so I was almost doing a handstand on his shoulders. Gracefully, he put me down and we twisted and turned to the music. We moved perfectly in sync with each other, our minds working as one. The shout chorus of the song began and Edward easily lifted me, moving my legs around

## La Cantante

his back, linking them over his arm. I flew behind him and landed in his arms, bridal style. The song ended and the crowd that was surrounding us applauded. I giggled and smiled at my talented fiancé. He kissed me and held me close to his chest. He was breathing heavily and his face was covered with sweat. He never looked so hot.

"Holy crow, Edward. That was so much fun," I squealed as he set me on my feet. "You are really good."

"It helps to have a partner who knows what she's doing," Edward smirked as he walked us to the edge of the dance floor, toward the bar. "You are equally as amazing, my beautiful girl. The only person who I've done that with is Alice and she's not nearly as good as you."

"The fact that she's like two pounds probably goes in her favor," I giggled.

"Bella, you are tiny. I was afraid you were going to fly away when I lifted you into that handstand lift," Edward teased. "What do you want to drink?"

"Water's fine, Edward," I said. "Where did you learn how to do that?"

"Esme really enjoyed ballroom dancing and she wanted Alice and I to be comfortable doing it. As children, we went to many hospital charity functions and she didn't want us to 'embarrass' her with dancing like crumping or juking. Ironically, Alice and I loved the ballroom dancing and really took to the swing dancing," Edward explained as we waited in line for the bar. "Where did learn how to do that?"

"Musical I was in during high school," I said. "We did *Godspell* and we added a part after 'Turn Back Oh Man' where we all jitterbugged. I was tiny and could easily be thrown around. My partner was nowhere near as gentle as you where. I had bruises all along my ribs and hips from where he gripped me. He was a massive football player."

"Oh shit, Bella. Are you okay?" Edward sputtered. "I didn't hurt you, did I?"

## La Cantante

"No, Edward. I'm fine," I said leaning against his chest. "You actually know how to lift a dancer as opposed to just being 'muscle.'"

He took a deep breath and gave me a crooked smirk. We ordered our drinks and walked back to our table. Our group was sitting around and chatting when we returned. We sat with them and spent the rest of the night dancing and talking. It was a lot of fun. About halfway through the night, Rose and Edward went out to the dance floor and did an almost perfectly choreographed routine to "Jump, Jive and Wail." Another crowd gathered around them and they received exuberant applause.

We stayed at the club until after twelve. Edward texted Amun around 11:30 to be picked up. We all climbed into the limo, exhausted. Amun drove us back to the hotel. Edward slipped out some money from his wallet and shook Amun's hand, slipping him whatever cash he had in his hand. Amun smiled shyly and thanked Edward for his generosity. We headed up to our respective rooms. Edward looked at me and he had a wicked grin on his face.

"You look like the cat that got the canary," I teased him.

"I had a wonderful time, tonight, *il mio cantante*," Edward said reverently. "Thank for your arranging all of this. You are so wonderful, my love."

"I'd do anything for you, Edward," I replied as he unlocked our room door.

He pushed the door open and ushered me inside. As soon as the door was closed, he was pressed behind me. His excitement was straining against my back. "As I would do anything for you, my Bella." His hands moved up and down my sides, grazing my breasts. "I want you, Bella. I wanted you from the moment I saw you in the lobby." His lips attached themselves to my neck and I moved my head to give him better access. His hands moved the back of my dress and they unzipped the silky red fabric. He pulled off the straps of my dress and it fell to my feet. Underneath my dress, I was wearing the corset that Edward liked so much. I heard a sharp intake of breath and Edward growled lightly. "You are so fucking gorgeous, Bella."



I turned around and looked at him. His eyes were black as pitch and filled with desire. I reached up and caressed his cheeks, moving my fingers to his tie. I undid it and tossed it on the floor with my dress. "You are so beautiful, Edward. Perfect. Loving. Brilliant," I said, kissing his face and lips with each admission. My fingers moved the buttons of his red shirt and I deftly removed them, pushing the dress shirt off his shoulders. He pulled off the undershirt. "Talented. Sexy. Hot. Intelligent. Mine," I said as I fell to my knees, unbuckling his belt to his dress pants. I slid them down his slim hips and released his perfect cock from their cotton prison. I looked up at Edward and he was gently pushing my curls away from my face. His lips were parted and his eyes were hooded.

I grasped his cock with my hand and began stroking the soft skin. Edward moaned and his fingers weaved in my hair. I looked up at him through my lashes and smiled seductively. I licked his shaft of his dick and his head fell back in pleasure. I took the head of his cock into my mouth and I swirled my tongue on the tip. "Bella," Edward moaned. I smiled and took him into my mouth as far as he could reach. I relaxed my jaw and eased him further into my mouth. With my hands, I massaged his balls and he was breathing erratically. I bobbed my head, swirling my tongue along his cock. I pumped with my hand along his shaft on his dick and I could feel him get harder in my mouth. His chest was heaving and I could tell he was close. His cock was twitching in my mouth and I was ready for his release. "So good...Bella..." he said in a strangled cry. His fingers twisted in my hair and he thrust his hips. I looked up at him, watching him as he came undone. I grazed my teeth along his length and his eyes clamped shut. A warm spray went down my throat. I eagerly drank all he gave me. I released his cock and stood up. Edward easily lifted me and I wrapped my legs around his waist. He carried us to the couch in the suite.

He spun us and I was on my back on the couch. He was on his knees, kissing my lips with his. My body reacted to his sensual kisses on my body. His fingers hooked in my panties and he drew them down my legs and he licked and nibbled down my torso to my apex of my thighs. He looked up at me and watched me intently as he pressed a kiss to my core, licking my clit. My hips bucked reflexively at his tender caress. "Edward," I moaned, weaving my fingers into his hair.

## La Cantante

He hummed into my skin and pressed two fingers into my body. His tongue worked magic on my clit and I rocked against his hand. He bit down gently on my clit. I moaned at the feelings his mouth elicited. Edward hummed against my skin, pumping his fingers into my heated core. He pulled away and watched my body. His eyes darted from my pussy to my eyes and he smiled crookedly. He added another finger, turning his hand over. He curled his fingers and swirled his tongue on my clit. I was near the edge. Edward's fingers and tongue moved faster, causing me to tumble over the precipice of pleasure. My muscles clamped down around Edward's hand and I screamed. Edward kept his mouth attached to me as I rode out my orgasm. When I finally returned to earth, Edward kissed up my body. He brushed my hair from my face, peppering kisses along my jaw and neck. I gently grabbed Edward face, kissing his swollen lips. I could taste my arousal on his lips and tongue. It was amazing. He was amazing.

"I need to feel you, my Bella," Edward rasped. He picked me up and he slipped beneath me on the couch. I straddled his waist and eased onto his hardened length. Edward moaned and his hands moved to my hips. I rotated my body. "So good, my love."

I weaved my fingers into his hair and angled his head back. My lips crashed against his. Edward's tongue moved into my mouth, dancing languidly with mine. I could feel a low growl in his chest. It made me so turned on. Edward's hands moved to my breasts and he rolled my nipples in his expert finger tips. I moaned and rocked against his cock. "Edward, I love you," I whispered in his ear. "Feels so..." My body began to react again to his ministrations.

"Let go, *il mio cantante*," he growled. He moved us so my back was on the coffee table in the suite. My breasts were bouncing and Edward picked up his pace in his thrusts. He moved one of my legs to his shoulder and I could hear the slapping of our skin together. "Shit, baby. I'm going...Fuck!" he roared. I felt him twitch in my body and spill into me. My muscles contracted and I exploded around him. Edward released my leg and he collapsed against me, breathing heavily. "You...love...damn," Edward sputtered.

## La Cantante

"Me, too, Edward," I giggled. I ran my hands through his silky hair. He kissed my chest and moved up to my lips. He smiled against my skin and he effortlessly picked me up from the table. I wrapped my legs around his waist and held onto him. He carried me to the bedroom and we settled into the plush bed. He lay his head on my chest, listening to my heart.

"I love you, my Bella. You are so wonderful," he breathed against my chest. "I am so grateful for everything that you have given me." Edward yawned and I could feel him get heavy against my torso.

"I love you too, my Edward. Sleep, handsome," I said as I caressed his back. He held me tightly and his breathing evened out. I kissed his forehead and sleep quickly claimed me.

xx LC xx

I woke up to my phone ringing from the living room. Edward was still tangled in my arms, not moving. I tried, unsuccessfully, to remove myself from his vice-like grip. "Edward?" I hissed.

"Hmmm," he grumbled, tightening his hold around my waist.

I wiggled, not able to move him. "Edward?" I asked more forcefully. "Wake up."

He cracked open a jade eye and gave me a sleepy grin. "Mornin'," he croaked, his voice thick with sleep. "What's up, love?"

"My phone is ringing, Edward. And I need to pee," I said. Edward scrambled away from me and I darted to the bathroom, quickly taking care of business. Afterward, I grabbed a t-shirt from Edward's suitcase and scampered into the living room, retrieving my cell phone. I had a new voicemail. I dialed the voicemail number and listened to the message from Rose. She said that the defense had rested and closing arguments were this morning at ten. I walked back into the bedroom, crawling into the bed with Edward.

## La Cantante

"Who called?" Edward said as he rolled onto his side. His eyes were bleary and he had a satisfied smirk on his face. I chuckled and smoothed his hair.

"Rose did. Closing arguments are starting today at nine," I explained. "I want to be there for her."

Edward nodded and he got up from the bed, throwing me over his shoulder. I shrieked and smacked his naked ass. He goosed me with his expert fingers and deposited me into the bathroom, turning on the shower. He ripped my t-shirt from my body and pulled me into shower. He leaned me back and helped me wash my hair. He washed my body reverently. He cupped my face and looked at me. His handsome features turned down into a frown as he ran his fingers under my eyes. "They're really red, my love."

"Looks like you get your sexy librarian today," I giggled. "They're old anyway. I need to switch them out."

I helped Edward wash his body, massaging his back and shoulders. We finished our shower and I popped out my contacts, throwing them into the garbage can. I put on my glasses, wrapping a towel around my body. Edward pouted. I pinched his sides and went to get dressed. I put on a pair of charcoal gray dress pants and a lavender sweater set. Edward walked out of the bathroom and he was wearing a pair of black pants and a royal blue sweater with a white dress shirt underneath. I went into the bathroom and rushed through my morning routine, putting on makeup and brushing my teeth. Edward was on the phone, speaking in hushed tones. When he looked at me, he gave me a smile. He walked toward me and pulled me into a hug. He kissed my forehead and he finished his phone call. "Who was that, Edward?"

"Carlisle. Apparently, my sperm donor called him yesterday. He was 'warning' me," Edward said as he laid his cheek against my hair. "I have a feeling that something is going to happen. *He's* not going to take a hint."

"I'm sorry, Edward," I whispered into his chest. I pressed a kiss against his heart and he let out a deep breath. "I know that you will be able to do this. I'm going to be with you, every step of the way."

## La Cantante

"Thank you, Bella," he said quietly. He held me tighter and I returned his embrace.

Our moment was broken by my phone shrilling in the bedroom. I walked into the bedroom and grabbed my phone. "Hello?"

"Are you guys coming?" Alice chirped.

"We're on our way, Ali. Relax," I said exasperatedly. "See you in a few."

I clicked off the phone and grabbed my purse and jacket. Edward was grumbling as he was slipping on his jacket. He put his wallet and phone in his pockets. He gave me a defeated sigh and held out his hand. I twined my fingers with his, leading us to the door. We rode to the lobby in silence. Once we got there, we were met with a very somber group of people. Very different from the lighthearted fun that we had last night. We didn't have time for breakfast as it was nearly 8:30 and we needed to be in the courtroom by 9. We exited the hotel and Emmett hailed a cab. We piled in and rode to the courthouse. We walked through the metal detectors and headed up to the courtroom.

Before we got settled in our seats, I went to the ladies room. I walked out of the bathroom and was greeted with steely gray eyes and a crooked smirk. My eyes widened and I tried to sidestep Edward's father. He caged me in with his hand and his cold gaze pierced into mine.

"I want to talk to my son," he sneered. "You're going to help me."

"No, I'm not," I said in a surprising cool voice. My heart was fluttering in my chest and he really gave me the creeps. "Edward has made it abundantly clear that he wants nothing to do with you. Please respect his wishes."

"If it weren't for me, he wouldn't be here," he snapped.

"Why do you want to talk to him so badly? It sure doesn't sound like you want to apologize for abandoning your ten year old son who lost his mother," I growled. "It sure doesn't sound like you want to atone for your mistakes."

Why?"

Edward's father eyes widened and I could see sadness behind them. He stepped back like I was going to bite. His gray eyes narrowed, "You're feisty. I can see why Edward likes you."

"He more than likes me," I seethed. "If you excuse me, I'm going to support my friend and be with Edward."

Edward's father's hand grabbed my arm and he stopped me. He was squeezing my arm tightly. It hurt. I squirmed and tried to lessen his grip. "Stop. That hurts," I whimpered. Edward came out of the courtroom and he saw me struggling with his father.

"What the fuck are you doing?" Edward roared. "Get your hands off my fiancée." Edward ran up to me and his father quickly released my arm. As soon as I was free, I ran into Edward's arms and he held me close.

"Fiancee?"

"Yes, fiancée. Why were you talking to her?" Edward growled.

"I was trying to get her to help me to talk to you."

"You lost that chance, *Father*. I told you earlier. I'm NOT your son. And now, seeing you hurt the love of my life, solidifies my decision. Do NOT talk to me or to her. Whatever you have to say is not important," Edward fumed. His face was flushed and he looked dangerous.

Edward's dad looked contrite, almost fearful of his son. They were both the same height, but my Edward easily had some weight and muscle on his dad. His eyes were flashing with anger and resentment. I squeezed Edward's waist and he looked down at me, his eyes apologetic. I laid my hand on his chest and tried to get him to go back into the courtroom. Edward glared at his father one more time and he shrank back against the wall.

## La Cantante

This whole ordeal rocked Edward to the core. He was trembling. I could feel his sadness, anger and hatred rolling off him in waves. We sat down in the audience, near the back. Edward gathered me in his arms and he held me tight, repeatedly apologizing quietly. His father entered the courtroom and he glanced our way, capturing my eyes. I glared behind my glasses at the pain he cause my love. He walked to the front and set up his station.

I was upset for Edward. I was sad for Edward. I was pissed at his dad for what he did. However, one question lingered.

*What does Edward Masen, Sr. want?*

**A/N: What does Edward's sperm donor want? Give me your suggestions or guesses. I hope you liked the lemon and the dancing. Up next, closing arguments, *Odyssey* and resolution with Sr.?**

# Resolutions

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 83: Resolutions

### EPOV

I saw red when I walked out of the courtroom. Bella had been in the bathroom longer than I had anticipated. I excused myself and found her pushed against a wall, with my sperm donor's hand around her fragile arm. She was squirming and she had a look of fear and dread in her eyes. "Stop! That hurts," Bella said forcefully.

*No one hurts my love. You are so dead, old man.*

"What the fuck are you doing?" I seethed. "Get your hands off my fiancée." I walked over to them and my father stepped away from my love, dropping her arm. Bella ran into my arms and I held her protectively against my chest. It took ALL of my control not to rip him limb from limb.

"Fiancée?" my father asked.

*Yes, old man. I'm marrying her. Leave her the fuck alone.*

"Yes, fiancée. Why are you talking to her?" I said through gritted teeth.

"I was trying to get her to help me talk to you," my father said contritely.

*Why would I want to do that? You abandoned me, asshat.*



## La Cantante

"You lost that chance, *Father*. I told you earlier. I'm NOT your son. And now, seeing you hurt the love of my life solidifies my decision. Do NOT talk to me or to her. Whatever you have to say is not important," I said, narrowing my eyes and moving toward my father.

*Do not punch him. There are cops here. Don't get arrested, Cullen!*

It was Bella that pulled me back from pummeling my sperm donor. Her soft hands squeezed my waist and it brought me back. I looked at her. Her eyes were sad and sympathetic. I apologized mentally to her and relished in her soft caress my chest. She tugged on my hand and led me back into the courtroom. We sat down in the last row of the courtroom. Bella pulled me into her arms and I just lost it. I kept apologizing to her. I apologized for my behavior. For his. For the whole situation. I wanted to make it all go away.

Why did he approach Bella? What was so important that he had to talk to her? Lay his hands on her? What did my father want?

The only answers to the those questions lay in actually talking to him. I couldn't do it. Not today. Could I ever do it? Probably not.

I faintly heard the bailiff call us all to rise for the judge. Bella stood up and dragged me with her. I removed my glasses and wiped my eyes and face. She leaned against me, twining her fingers with mine. With her other hand, she traced soothing circles on my back. We eventually sat down and she murmured in my ear her love for me. Her appreciation for saving me from my father. Her pride in who I was and who I was going to be.

I didn't pay attention to the closing arguments. They were inconsequential to me. All that mattered was getting the hell away from Chicago. I loved the city, but the memories of being here were too painful. I missed my mom. I missed my family. It was too much.

I was so dazed; I didn't even realize that court was adjourned. Bella was tugging on my arm, looking at me with a worried expression. "Edward?" she asked.

## La Cantante

"Sorry," I mumbled.

"Are you okay, man?" Emmett asked. Rose was standing next to him. She looked at me with concern.

"I'm fine," I answered automatically.

"No, you're not, big brother," Alice said simply.

"Can I get a few minutes with Bella?" I asked quietly.

They all nodded and headed out of the courtroom. I looked at my love and caressed her cheeks. She ran her fingers through my hair, brushing it off my forehead. "What is it, handsome?"

"I want to visit my mother's grave," I whispered. "I haven't been back since her funeral. Come with me?"

"Of course, Edward," Bella responded, kissing my cheek. "Where's the cemetery?"

"It's Queen of Heaven Cemetery in Hillside. We'll have to rent a car," I mumbled.

"The hotel provides complimentary car service. I'm certain you can borrow one of their cars to drive to Hillside," Bella said. "Let's head back to the hotel and talk to the concierge."

I nodded and let Bella lead me back to foyer outside the courtroom. I stood near the door, in my own little world. Not a world I wanted to be in. Bella explained to the group that we were heading back to the hotel and run an errand. She then grabbed my hand and dragged me through the Cook County Courthouse. She hailed a cab and we headed back to the W Hotel. I was still not paying attention as we walked through the lobby and stopped in front of the concierge's desk.

## La Cantante

"Can I help you?" the young woman asked. "I'm Mina, by the way."

We sat down and I gave Bella a small smile. "We need to borrow a car," Bella said. "I know on the hotel's website that you provide transportation for guests. We'd like to use it."

"Of course," Mina smiled. "You're not leaving the state, are you?"

"No. Going to Hillside?" Bella said. "I have no idea where that's at, but I'm assuming it's still in Illinois."

"It's about a half hour west of here," Mina explained. "I'll need a credit card for a deposit and the person who is driving, their driver's license."

Bella opened her purse and took out her debit card and her driver's license. Mina informed her that she needed to charge a higher deposit as we were under the age of 25. Bella waved it off and signed the paperwork. Mina also went so far as printing off directions to Queen of Heaven Cemetery for us from the hotel. She grabbed a set of keys and led us down to the garage under the hotel. She opened a car, an Acura TL and handed Bella the keys.

She slid into the driver's side while I walked to the passenger side. She eased the car out of the spot and gave Mina a wave. Bella handed me the directions and told me to guide her. I did my best, as I was only a child when I was last in the city and western suburbs. We managed to get out to the cemetery, only having to turn around once. I directed Bella to my mother's gravesite and she parked the car close to it. When we turned around, I picked up some flowers to lie on her grave. Calla lilies, her favorite.

I found my mother's grave easily. It was close to the edge of the cemetery. It had a large, ornate headstone that said Masen on it. In the headstone, there was one of my favorite pictures of my mom. It was of her, smiling at her piano. She looked so beautiful. So alive. Bella laced her fingers with mine and we walked to her grave. I put the flowers next to the stone and lightly ran my finger over the granite. *Elizabeth Anne Cullen Masen, Loving Wife, Mother and Sister.*

## La Cantante

I fell to the ground and crumbled. Tears escaped my eyes and I was bawling. Bella was on her knees, holding me tightly. "Let it out, Edward. I know you're hurting," she said quietly. "I'm here and I love you."

"I miss her so much, Bella," I sobbed. "I wish she was still here."

"I know, Edward. I wish I could do something to make your pain go away," she said, her voice breaking.

I gathered her in my lap and held her tightly. "You're doing it, my Bella. By just being here, you are making the pain bearable," I said in her hair.

We sat there, on the frozen ground of the cemetery, for an immeasurable amount of time. I told Bella about some of the things that my mom and I did. I told her about our trip to Disneyworld and my huge crush on the actress who played Belle. I was five. I insisted that 'Belle' and my mom were sisters because they looked so much alike. It was cathartic.

We were so wrapped up in our conversation, that we didn't hear another car pull up. Someone behind us cleared their throat and I looked up to see my sperm donor. "I figured you'd be here," he said quietly.

I bristled and stood up quickly. "What do you want? Can't I visit her without you intruding?" I hissed.

"Edward, she was my wife," he sighed.

Bella dusted off her pants and moved away. "I'll let you two talk," she said, barely above a whisper.

"Bella, no. Please stay," I begged.

"You need to talk to him," Bella insisted. "I'll be in the car. I love you." She kissed my lips sweetly and caressed my cheek. I heaved a resigned sigh and looked at my sperm donor.

## La Cantante

"Do not desecrate my mother's memory, old man," I fumed. "If you have something to say, say it. After that, I'm done with you."

"Fuck," he mumbled. He ran his hand over his face and tugged on his hair. "Edward, I don't know where to begin."

"You wanted to talk. So, talk," I stated simply, crossing my arms over my chest. "You're a lawyer. You know how to use your words."

He narrowed his eyes and glared at me. "You don't know what it was like after she died. She was my world. My everything. Then she was gone. I was left with this huge house and you. You look exactly like her. I couldn't look into your eyes and not see your mother. It was a constant reminder of what was missing from my life," he said quietly. "I didn't know how to cope. How to live. How to survive without her."

"Not to sound selfish, but you had to take care of me. I was ten," I grumbled. "Ten!"

"She always took such good care of you. She loved you, unconditionally. When she got sick, I didn't know what to do. I was lost," he said honestly. "Then, when she died I still had no idea what to do."

"You could have asked," I snapped. "Carlisle and Esme were there. They were more than willing to help."

"I was being selfish, at that point, Edward. I was so consumed by my grief that I didn't know what to do. My life as I knew it had ended. She was gone. Your mother, my wife was gone. That was the toughest day of my life, burying her. The second toughest day of my life was when I signed over my parental rights to Carlisle and Esme," he said, looking at his hands. He toyed with his wedding ring. I hadn't noticed it before, but he hadn't removed it. "I knew I fucked up. Big time."

"Yeah, you did. I was missing my mother as much as you were missing your wife," I stated. "I thought you stopped loving me with the way you were acting

## La Cantante

toward me. I still think that you don't love me. You abandoned me."

"Edward, I know I fucked up. However, one thing has NEVER changed. I never stopped loving you. As much as I hated what I had to do, you are my son. My flesh and blood. I terminated my parental rights because I was unfit to care for you. I did it because I loved you. I still love you," he said. "I always will love you."

I looked at him, shocked at his admission. His steel grey eyes filled with tears and he hastily swiped the tears away. "I know I hurt you, Edward. I know that I may have damaged our relationship forever. But I did it out of love. It was a fucked up way of showing it, but that was my reasoning behind it," he said, looking into my eyes. He stepped toward me. I instinctually took a step back, wary of his movements. "I know you don't trust me. But I want to rebuild our relationship. I know it won't happen overnight. I know that we will never be 'father and son,' but I want to have some sort of relationship with you, Edward. Please?"

Did I want this? Did I want to reestablish a relationship with my father? I looked at him and he looked so old. I always thought my dad was invincible. Superman. He looked defeated. His brown hair was graying, his eyes were tired, his face turned into a permanent frown, his proud stance was hunched and he looked like he had been through hell and back. The hell of losing his wife and his son. His façade in the courtroom was just that. A cover for what he truly was like.

I gulped down a sob that threatened to escape my throat. I arched a brow and steeled my shoulders squarely, looking into his eyes. "I'll try," I said. "I'm not making any promises, though. I'm also not calling you 'dad.'"

"I get that, Edward. Call me whatever you want. Hateful bastard works just nicely," he joked.

"Don't tempt me," I said, looking over my glasses at him. "I do have a question for you."

## La Cantante

"Anything, Edward," he replied.

"Why did you put your hands on my fiancée?" I asked.

"I don't know. I was desperate," he said dejectedly. "I fucked up. Again. Please tell your fiancée that I'm sorry."

"I will," I sighed.

"I can't believe you're getting married, Edward. It seems like yesterday I was holding you in my arms as a baby. Now, marriage? It's surreal," he mused.

"She makes me happy. Incredibly happy. I love her tremendously," I said.

"What's her name, Edward? In all of that ruckus, I don't even know your fiancée's name."

"Isabella Swan. She likes to be called Bella," I responded.

"When's the wedding?"

"August 13th," I said. "This summer."

"Is she pregnant?" he asked.

I looked at him and sneered. "No. We've been safe. Not like you had any say in how I was raised. Carlisle explained everything to me, thank you very much."

"I'm sorry, Edward. You just so young. Both of you. You'll be 21 and she's what 18?"

"She just turned 19. However, she's wise beyond her years. She's amazing. She's my life. Like mom was yours," I said. "Look, I said I'd try. However, I'm done for now. I'm tired and I'm getting a migraine."

"Sorry. I know that's my fault. The migraines," he joked pathetically.

## La Cantante

"One of the triggers is stress. I've been a tad stressed lately," I snapped.

"That's understandable. Edward, I am truly sorry. I love you, very much. Even though I showed it poorly," he sighed. "Can I at least hug you? I was never affectionate when you were younger, but I need this."

I eyed him warily. He held out his arms, with sadness in his eyes. I took a tentative step toward him and he wrapped his arms around my shoulders. I awkwardly returned his embrace. I felt his tears on my shoulder and my heart melted, a little. However, we still had a long way to go. "I'm sorry that you lost her," I whispered.

"I'm sorry you lost both of us, Edward," he said as he looked at me. "I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me."

"Give me time," I said. "Hateful Bastard."

He smirked and chuckled. "It works. However, why don't you just call me Senior for now," he suggested. I nodded. He tentatively patted my cheek and took a step away. "She would have been proud of you, Edward. I know she is."

I smiled and looked at her gravestone. "I always wanted to make her proud."

"You're doing it. I'd like to call you. Can I get your number?" Senior asked. I motioned for his phone and programmed my number into it. I called my cell phone with his and got his number. "I'll let you go, Edward. I love you, son."

"Thanks, Senior," I said, trying out the 'name' we agreed on. "I'll talk to you soon."

I walked around my father and slipped into the car. Bella slipped her hand into mine and squeezed it tightly. "How do you feel, handsome?" she asked.

"Lighter," I replied. "Thank you for pushing me."

"It's my job, Edward," she said. "I'm proud of you. So proud."



## La Cantante

"Thank you, my love. I couldn't have done it without you," I said as I brushed my hand across her soft cheek. "I love you, *il mio cantante*."

"I love you, more, Edward," she whispered as she kissed my lips chastely.

She turned the car on and we headed back to the highway. Bella let me think about what just happened. She didn't press me. She didn't judge me. She just let me think. Every so often, she would squeeze my hand or caress my cheek. Subtle reminders that she was there for me. In every way possible, she saved me. She guided me. Bella was my rock and I was so grateful for her. In many ways, Bella is soft and fragile. However, in other ways, she is stronger than the toughest man. Today, she had the strength of two hundred men. The wisdom of someone five times her age. The patience of a saint. And she was mine. She was my love. My soul mate. My equal. My everything.

*Mine.*

**A/N: Short chapter, but, Edward got some closure with Senior. Possibly rebuilding his relationship with him...Up next, Odyssey boat trip (which is insanely fun, by the way), and meeting with the Twilight Record Company executive. Leave me love, please :)**

# Odyssey and Twilight

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*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 84: Odyssey and Twilight

### BPOV

We drove back to Chicago. It took forever. Traffic was a bitch. Edward was very quiet. His hand was laced with mine and his eyes were sad. However, he needed the time to process what happened today at the courthouse and at the cemetery. It pained me to see my confident, strong fiancé fall apart. He was my rock and he crumbled. I was so worried for his well-being. But, I knew that he needed to talk to his father. I pushed him to do it. Their conversation was heated, but I could see the sadness in his father's eyes when he approached me at the courthouse. Even though he went about it the wrong way, he needed to talk to his son. Edward needed to talk to his father. This needed to be done. Edward might have hated me for it, but they both needed closure.

"Thank you," Edward said quietly, his voice breaking. "For pushing me, Bella."

"You're welcome, Edward," I said as I caressed his cheek. "You needed to talk to him. I could see how it was weighing on your shoulders: the pain of being here and his constant intrusion in your life. What did he say?"

"He apologized," Edward said, his eyes filling with tears. "He said he did it out of love. He was not capable of caring for me after my mom's death. He said that he still loves me. He wants to try and rebuild some sort of relationship."

"And, what did you say?" I pressed.

## La Cantante

"That I'd try. I don't know to what extent I'll be able to have a relationship with him, but I'm going to try. He's the last connection to her that I have," Edward sighed. "However, I wouldn't have done it without you, Bella. So, thank you. I can't express how much I appreciate what you've done for me."

"Edward, you have been my rock, my savior, this year. You are an amazing man. It was my turn to be your rock. Your support. Your savior," I said fervently. "I understand that this was not easy by any stretch of the imagination, but you did it. I'm proud of you and I love you."

"You are an angel, Bella. In my eyes, my mom picked you out, specifically for me, from heaven," Edward sighed. He looked at me and gave me my favorite crooked smirk. "I just hope she's not watching all the time, if you know what I mean."

"Me too, Edward. Talk about embarrassing," I giggled. "What else did your dad say?"

"He said he was sorry for hurting you," Edward mumbled. "I was ready to kill him, Bella. No one has any right to put their hands on you."

"Edward, he just startled me. He approached me in an uncomfortable way, but he just wanted to talk to you," I said.

"If he hurts you again, I will cause him bodily harm," Edward said, giving me a pointed glare.

"My hero," I swooned, fluttering my eyelashes.

"You bet your sweet ass, I'm your hero," Edward snorted. "I love you, Bella."

"As I love you, Edward," I smiled. "Are you ready to go on the boat?"

"The Odyssey? Not really. I know why you set up the whole thing. To keep me occupied, but I'm really not in the mood," Edward said as he shifted in his seat. "If we get back to the hotel in time. I forgot how bad Chicago traffic is. Jeez!"

## La Cantante

"Tell me about it. We've been sitting here for like fifteen minutes," I grumbled.

"It should open up after we get past Austin. Another lane is added to the highway," Edward explained. "It's just one more exit."

I checked the clock and saw that it was a little after five. We needed to be at Navy Pier by no later than 6:30. Edward and I would have to book it back to our room to change and head down to the front desk for Amun to drive us to Navy Pier.

Edward was right. After Austin, the highway opened up and we got back to the hotel a little after 5:30. We went up to our room and changed for the dinner cruise. I put on a sleek black dress and red 'fuck me' heels. I tied my hair back into a low ponytail. I slipped on my contacts and deepened my makeup. Edward put on a pair of charcoal gray dress pants, white shirt and black sport coat. He put a black, gray and pink tie. He gave me a smirk, but it didn't quite reach his eyes. He was still perseverating.

"Okay, Edward. We're not going," I said, stepping out of my shoes.

"What? No, we're going. I'll get out of my funk. I promise," he said holding up his right hand. I arched a brow, crossing my arms over my chest. Edward walked toward me and wrapped his arms around my waist. "I promise, love." He leaned down and caressed my lips with his. I angled my head so we could deepen the kiss. Edward pulled my bottom lip between his teeth and I could hear a quiet groan emanate from his chest. He pulled away and laid his head against my forehead. "I'm already feeling better, Bella."

"I can feel how good you're feeling, Edward," I giggled, palming his hardened length. "Let's go, baby."

He opened his eyes and looked into mine. They were nearly black with desire and he nodded. We left our suite and headed down to the lobby. The rest of our group was sitting in the lobby. Rose was wearing a slinky purple dress and black heels. Alice was in a simple navy blue sheath dress and beige pumps. The guys were in a pair of dress pants and dress shirts. They all looked very

nice.

We piled into the limo and Amun drove us to Navy Pier, dropping us off at the entrance. We dashed to the slip and got into line for the Odyssey. It was a sleek, large boat. We were on the top deck for our cruise. Rose carried her camera and she was snapping pictures as we waited in line. We boarded the boat, posing for a group picture before heading to our deck. The photographer handed us a slip, informing us that our picture would be ready when we returned from our cruise. We walked up the stairs to the top deck and settled into our seats, which were right by the window. The server came around and offered us some drinks. Emmett ordered a beer and the rest of us got soda or water.

"So, Eddie, how are you feeling?" Emmett said after he got his drink.

"I was just peachy until you called me Eddie, Emmett," Edward laughed.

"Sorry, Edward," Emmett snorted. "You are so picky about your name, man. Sheesh!"

"To answer your question, Emmett, I am okay," Edward answered honestly. "I visited my mom's grave and my father came while we were there. We spoke briefly. He apologized and explained why he did what he did. He also wants a relationship with me."

"What are you going to do, big brother?" Alice asked, her blue eyes filled with concern.

"I told him I'd try," Edward breathed. Under the table, he captured my hand and squeezed tightly. "We'll see what happens."

"If you ever need to talk, Edward..." Jasper offered.

"Thanks, Jas. But I'm good. I may contact my old therapist when we get back to New York. We'll see," Edward smiled. "Rosalie, I feel like I should give you an apology."

## La Cantante

"Edward, please," she snorted. "I understand. Completely."

"I still feel horribly. As a friend, I should have been there for you," Edward said quietly, his eyes apologetic.

"You were here for me, Edward. Thank you," Rose said as she smiled at my fiancé. "I just wonder if they are going to come back with any decision before we leave."

"They'll call you, right?" I asked.

"Yeah. Based off the closing arguments, it really looked like they were going to convict Royce for my rape and rapes of the other four women. Your father was pretty defeated when he gave his closing argument, Edward. I think your presence in the courtroom and the whole situation between you two affected him greatly," Rose said.

"Good. I'm glad. Hopefully Royce will be sentenced to jail for a long time," Edward snarled. "He was an animal, Rose. I can't believe what he did to you."

"He'll get what's coming to him. I'm a firm believer in karma," Rose said sincerely. "He will get fucked in the ass by some huge inmate named Bubba and he'll be his bitch for the rest of his life."

"Wow, Rose. That's, um, descriptive," Jasper squeaked. "Didn't need to hear that before dinner."

"Sorry, Jasper. However, that's what's going to happen to him," Rose laughed. "If he's convicted."

"He will be," Alice said. "I have a..."

"Feeling," we all said.

"You all suck," Alice grumbled.

## La Cantante

We sat in silence and watched as we pulled away from Navy Pier. As soon as we pulled away, another server came, introducing herself to our little group.

"Good evening. My name is Jeanette and I'll be your server for tonight. I'll be working with Jorge who took your drink orders. Is this the first time on the Odyssey?" she asked kindly.

We all nodded and she began her speech about the boat and what was so special about it. She then prattled on the specials for the cruise. Jeanette took our appetizer order and darted off to put it into the computer.

"So, what time are we meeting with the Twilight executive?" Jasper asked.

Edward pulled out his phone. "Two at the Hancock Building, 52nd Floor."

"The executive didn't call to cancel or anything?" Emmett asked warily.

"Nope," Edward said. "I did get an email from Kellan saying that Miller, the executive, was very excited to meet us. So, we'll see what he has to say. Is everyone coming?"

"We planned on it," Jasper answered.

"I won't be there if they say if they have a verdict for that fucktard, Royce," Emmett said as he finished his beer. He caught Jorge's eyes and gestured for another one. "You understand, right?"

"Of course, Em," I said with a smile.

"Thanks, Isabelly," he boomed. "I love you, baby sister."

"I love you too, brother bear," I giggled.

"Okay, let's take some pictures," Rose said enthusiastically. "Edward and Bella get together and act like you're in love."

## La Cantante

"That won't be hard, Rose," Edward laughed as he put his arm over my shoulder. He nuzzled my cheek and I leaned closer into him. Rose snapped a few pictures. She then handed me her camera and asked for me to take pictures of her and Emmett. Jasper and Alice were last. Alice sat on Jasper's lap, kissing his cheeks. Jeanette came with our food and we asked her to take our picture as a large group. She gladly obliged, giggling at Emmett's antics. After taking our pictures, she and Jorge passed out our appetizers and she took our dinner order. We all shared our appetizers and they were delicious.

In between our appetizers and main course, Edward and I headed up to the very top deck of the boat. We were all alone. I shivered and Edward put his suit coat around my shoulders, standing behind me. "It's so beautiful, Edward."

"It pales in comparison to you, love," Edward said as he squeezed my waist.

"You're biased, Edward," I snorted.

"And this is a bad thing because...?" Edward laughed. "You are the most beautiful woman in the world to me, Bella."

"Even prettier than your Disneyworld crush, Belle?" I giggled.

"More so. Times a hundred million," he said as he kissed my neck. We stood on the top deck, wrapped in our little bubble of contentment. "I love you, Bella."

"I love you, too, Edward. Are you feeling better?" I asked, turning in his arms, putting my hands on his hips.

"Much better," he said, giving me a sweet kiss. "Thank you for arranging this."

"It was my pleasure. I'm glad you're feeling better. You know you can talk to me anytime, right?" I said as I ran my fingers through his hair. He nodded and grabbed my hand, kissing my palm. He pulled me into a tight embrace. In this hug, I could feel all his love being poured through it. He held onto me like I was his one reason for living. He held onto me like I was his life raft in an



## La Cantante

ocean of unknowns. "What are you thinking about, Edward?"

"Nothing. Everything. How much my life has changed since I've met you," Edward said into my hair. "How much I don't want it to go back to what it was before I met you. Why?"

"You're squeezing awfully tight, Edward," I laughed into his shoulder. He released me and looked into my eyes. His jade orbs filled with sadness. "I'm not complaining, handsome. You just seem to be thinking about something."

"I'm just thinking about what happened today at the cemetery," he said, looking down. "Do I really want to have a relationship with my sperm donor? Senior?"

"Senior?" I asked.

"That's what he suggested I call him. He made some lame joke about calling him 'Hateful Bastard.' I was tempted on doing it," Edward chuckled darkly.

"Edward, only you can make the decision on having a relationship with Senior. Whatever you decide to do, I'll support you. I've told you that and I mean it," I said, caressing his cheek. I put my finger under his chin and forced him to look at me in my eyes. "I mean it, Edward," I said more forcefully after I caught his eyes. "If you want to have a relationship with your dad, then great. If not, he needs to abide by your decision."

"How do you know exactly what to say, Bella?" he asked reverently. He brushed a wayward hair off my forehead and kissed my lips chastely. "You always know the right thing to say to me when I get too serious. Or think too much."

"I've got two crazy parents who can't think for shit. And you've seen Emmett. Holy hell, he's a mess. I've always been the adult in all of my relationships. I got wise very quickly," I said.

"You're beyond wise, my love," Edward said as he held me to his chest. "And you're shivering. We're going back in the dining room. I don't want you to get

## La Cantante

pneumonia again. That was horrendous."

I nodded and we headed back to our table in the ship. Our food had arrived and we tucked into our delicious meals. In the rear of the deck, a small jazz band was setting up and tuning their instruments. Some of the tables that were not filled up were removed and a small dance floor was being laid down. Jeanette returned and offered us coffee and dessert. We placed an order and fell into a comfortable conversation about the last half of the school year. It was insane how quickly the year had gone. It seemed like yesterday I was moving into the dorms with Rosalie and Alice. Now, I'm engaged and living in an apartment with my Edward.

*My Edward. My prince charming. Sigh!*

After we ate our dessert and drank our coffee, we headed out onto the dance floor. The smooth jazz was filling the cabin of the boat. Edward held me in his arms, swaying to the music. His eyes were closed and his face was content. We danced until the boat docked and headed to the exit of Navy Pier. Amun was waiting for us with a smile on his face. We clambered into the car and drove back to the hotel.

When we got back into our suite, Edward and I made love. Slow and sweet. He needed it. He desperately needed to feel loved and I was willing to give it to him. We fell asleep, wrapped in each other's embrace.

xx LC xx

I woke up to my cell phone ringing on the nightstand. I picked it up, looking at the caller ID. *Rosalie*.

"Hello?" I croaked.

"They came back with a verdict," Rose squeaked. "They are going to announce this morning. Can you be there, Bella? Please?"

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"Of course, Rosalie," I said, sitting up. I gathered the covers around my still naked body and cradled the phone between my shoulder and ear. "Do you want to talk?"

"Yeah," she breathed. "Can I come up?"

"Definitely, Rose. Just give me fifteen minutes. I want to shower and get dressed," I said.

"See you in a bit, Bella. Love you, girl," she smiled over the phone.

"Love you, too, Rose," I said as I clicked off the call. I looked at Edward and he was still asleep. I brushed his hair off his forehead. He sighed and curled up in the bed. I kissed his cheek and scrambled out of bed, rushing through my shower. I put some mousse in my hair and popped my contacts in. I went into the bedroom and grabbed a pair of yoga pants and a t-shirt. I tiptoed out of the bedroom, closing the door. As I entered the main area of the suite, I heard a faint knock on the door. I opened it up and Rose was standing there, nibbling her fingernail. I held out my arms and she fell into them, sobbing. "Oh, Rose," I said sadly.

"I don't know why I'm crying, Bella," she sniffled. I guided her to the couch, blushing as I sat down. "Why are you blushing?"

I smirked, "Do you really want to know?"

"No, I don't," she giggled. "What if they find him innocent? What's going to happen?"

"Rose, the evidence against him was rock solid. He didn't use a condom and his DNA was inside your body. The pictures were gruesome, but effective. He's definitely guilty," I said as I smoothed her blonde hair. "I never realized how brutal his attack was. Your recovery must have been hell."

"It was. The doctors pretty much told me that children are not a possibility for me. The damage to my vagina and cervix was irreparable. That's another thing

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I'm worried about. Emmett," she said quietly. "He's been very quiet and it almost seems like he's pulling away from me, Bella. I'm damaged goods. Why would he want me?"

"You're all he talks about," I replied. "He loves you unconditionally. My brother may not be the sharpest tool in the shed, but he knows he loves you. Very much. And you're not damaged. If you can't have children the 'traditional' way, you could always adopt. Or you could get a surrogate. You still get your period, right?"

"Yeah, but it's wonky. Even with birth control," she sighed. "However, that's a long ways off. I am still concerned about Emmett. What would I do if he broke up with me?"

"He's not going to break up with you. Trust me," I smiled. I subconsciously played with my engagement ring. It shone in the sunlight and Rose took a sharp inhale of breath. She raised her brows. "He's thinking about it."

"No shit? Proposing?" Rose squeaked.

"He asked my mom for our grandmother's engagement ring," I said. "Don't tell him I told you. Please?"

"I promise, Bella," Rose said, bouncing on the couch. "Mrs. Emmett Swan. I like...no, I love the sound of that."

"I love the idea of you being my sister better," I said as I hugged her. Rosalie returned my hug, giggling. "Feeling better?"

"Definitely. Thanks, sis," she smiled. "I'm going to head back downstairs to get ready. Meet you down in the lobby at 8:30. Court is in session at 9. Love you."

"Love you, too," I beamed. She hopped up and walked to the door. She winked and she slipped out the door. I went back into the bedroom and found Edward sitting up in bed, a huge smile on his face. "What's with the goofy grin, Edward?"

"You," he answered simply.

"Explain, Cullen," I said as I sat down on the bed, facing him.

"I heard your conversation with Rosalie. You are so selfless, Bella. Your heart is so big. I'm so lucky to have you," he smiled. "Is it true that Emmett is thinking about proposing to Rose?"

"Yeah, my mom refuses to give him the ring, though. She is still being a bit petty about our wedding and the fact we found each other so early in our lives. I'm going to try and convince her when I go to visit over Easter. You're coming right?"

"I was planning on it. I've never been to Jacksonville," Edward said as he reached for me. I settled against his chest, idly playing with his Claddaugh ring on his finger. "You'll have to show me around."

"I'll be with you in never being there. I was only there once and I spent almost all of my time at my mom's house," I said. "It was right after she and Phil got married. They were in the 'lovey dovey' stage of their marriage and didn't want to leave the house all that often. Besides, we're only going to be there for a few days."

"Sounds good to me. Other than talk about Emmett, what did Rose want?" Edward asked as he kissed my temple.

"They came back with a verdict. We're going to courthouse this morning in solidarity," I said. "You probably should shower."

"Are you saying I smell?" Edward teased.

"No, Edward," I giggled. I sniffed him and wrinkled my nose. "Okay, maybe a little."

"For the love..." Edward grumbled. He got out of bed and walked to the bathroom. "You can be so sweet and loving. However, brutally honest."

## La Cantante

"But you love me, Stinky," I snickered.

"Yes, I do. With all my stinking heart," he sighed.

"Shower, Edward," I said, rolling my eyes. He gave me a salute and headed into the bathroom. I heard the shower turn on and I got dressed. I decided to keep it a bit more casual. I put on a pair of dark wash jeans, a slate gray graphic t-shirt and a black blazer. I slipped on my black boots and put on my crest and a pair of chunky hoops. Edward came out a short time later and he dressed just as casually as I did. He was wearing a pair of dark jeans with a red button up shirt and the same sport coat as last night. He slipped on a pair of black Chucks and attempted to tame his hair.

"Bella, I need your assistance," he grumbled.

"What, love?" I asked. He pointed to his hair and it was a hot mess. "What did you do?"

"It looks like I stuck my finger in an electric socket. Help?"

I tugged his hand and sat him on the toilet. I ran my hands through some water and dampened his hair. I picked up the blow dryer, styling it with my fingers. I put some pomade on my hands, slicking it through his soft hair, making it look casually messy. He captured my hands as I pulled away. His eyes were filled with awe and love. "Thank you, Bella."

"You're welcome, Edward," I said as I kissed his lips sweetly. "Let's boogie, handsome."

He got up from the toilet and sprayed on some cologne. "So I don't stink," he smirked.

"Oh lord," I said as I rolled my eyes. I walked out into the living room, grabbing my purse and phone. Edward put his wallet and phone into his jacket pocket. He laced his fingers with mine and walked to the elevator. We rode down to the lobby. Emmett and Rose were sitting in the lobby. Alice and

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Jasper were chatting with the concierge. Rose caught my eye and gave me a wink. I smiled and winked back.

We hailed a cab and drove to the courthouse. We got through the metal detectors and sat down in the gallery of the courtroom. Rose clung to Emmett with a vengeance. I sat on her other side, holding her hand. Edward had his hand protectively on my waist, idly tracing circles over my tattoo. The prosecution entered the courtroom, giving Rose a smile. Edward's father came in and gave Edward a small smile. To my surprise, Edward returned it with a small nod of his head.

The bailiffs announced the judge and we all stood up. The judge asked the jury if they had reached a verdict. The foreman said that they had. The judge asked Royce to stand up. He did so with a confident grin.

"What is your verdict?" Judge McAfee asked.

"We, the jury, find Royce King guilty of all charges presented against him," the foreman said confidently.

"WHAT?" Royce yelled. "This is horseshit! I'm fucking innocent."

"Get control of your client, Mr. Masen," Judge McAfee scolded.

Edward's dad placed a hand on Royce's shoulder. He smacked it away and sneered in Senior's face. Royce pushed him away, causing him to fall on the floor. "You lost this for me, Masen! You fucker. I paid you a shitload of money and you lost this case."

"One more outburst, Mr. King and I will find you in contempt of court," Judge McAfee snapped.

"What the fuck is the point, *your honor*? I'm already going to jail," Royce snarled. "All because this ass clown didn't keep his fucking head in the game. Your worthless, Masen."

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"That's it! Mr. King, you are found to be in contempt of court. You will be paying the state of Illinois \$500. Bailiffs, take him out of here," Judge McAfee commanded. The bailiffs surrounded Royce and dragged him out of the courtroom. Senior stood up and dusted off his pant legs, staring at his client.

"Your honor, I apologize on behalf of my client. His behavior was inexcusable," Senior said quietly. "However, I cannot be his representative at this time. My partner, Sean McNamara, will be handling the rest of his case. I'm recusing myself from this case, effectively immediately."

"Thank you, Mr. Masen, for informing the court of your decision. If there is nothing else?" Judge McAfee asked.

"No, your honor," Rebecca, the prosecuting attorney answered.

"No, your honor," Senior said.

"Then, court is adjourned. Sentencing for Mr. King will take place on May 17th," Judge McAfee said before she got up from the bench. She headed into her chambers, shutting the door.

The prosecuting attorneys shook Rose's hand, congratulating her. The courtroom emptied out quickly and Senior approached us, his eyes remorseful. His proud stance was hunched and he looked much older than he did at the beginning of the trial.

"Ms. Hale?" he asked quietly. "I want to apologize to you. My client is a horrendous human being. After working with him, I've decided to move back to civil cases. Seeing the pain in your eyes broke my heart. Seeing what was done to you made me want to kill him. I should have distanced myself from this case in the first place, but I didn't see the case. I only saw dollar signs."

"Mr. Masen, I appreciate your apology," Rose said coolly. "However, you represented an animal. I'm glad he's guilty and that he will be serving time. I cannot forgive him or you, for that matter, because he broke me. You, in turn, by representing him, broke me as well."



## La Cantante

"I understand, Ms. Hale," Senior said. "I wish you all the best."

He gathered his things and headed out of the courtroom. Edward watched him like a hawk. I squeezed his hand and looked at him. His eyes caught mine and I nodded to him. Edward darted out of the courtroom, presumably to talk to his dad.

"How are you feeling, Rose?" Alice asked.

"Relieved," Rose smiled. "He got what he deserved."

"All he needs is his 'Bubba,'" I giggled.

"Damn straight," Rose snorted.

"Wait, 'Bubba?'" Emmett asked.

"Inside joke," Rose and I answered, hugging.

Jasper checked his watch and he grumbled. "We probably need to get going. Let's get some celebratory grub before meeting with Miller at the Hancock Building."

We all nodded and headed out of the courtroom. Edward was talking to his father. They didn't appear to be fighting. By the end of the conversation, they both were smiling. It was shocking how much they looked alike when they smiled. If Edward looked as good as his father when he's in his forties, I would be a lucky woman.

We waited for Edward. He jogged up and pulled me into a tight embrace, kissing me forcefully. When he pulled away, I was breathless. "What was that for?"

"Just because," he smirked. "Food. I need food. My stomach is eating itself."

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"Okay, Emmett," I giggled, poking him in the belly. He snorted like the Pillsbury Doughboy. He arched his brow and covered his mouth. I fell forward in a full out guffaw. The rest of our little group looked at me like I was crazy. I knew I looked bat shit nutty. Edward smacked my ass and grabbed my hand. I kicked him in the butt with my boot and we walked to some deli near the courthouse.

Edward explained about what he spoke with his father after his apology to Rose. He said that his father couldn't see young women and innocent people go through the pain of a trial. Being a civil attorney was easier on the soul. He also explained that Senior was thinking about leaving Chicago. He needed to make a clean start someplace new. Edward suggested moving to New York. In his own way, he was beginning to reconnect with his dad. I couldn't be more happy for him. My fiancé was coming back to me. As we ate lunch, I traced my finger on his knee, eliciting a few groans from him. Before we walked to the Hancock Building, I pulled him to me, kissing him. I traced his lips with my tongue. He opened his mouth and I slipped my tongue inside, dancing with his. He pulled me flush to his body and I could feel his excitement against my belly. "What was *that* for, Bella?"

"Just because," I said, quoting his earlier response. "I love you, my Edward."

"I love you, my Bella," he smiled against lips. "Let's go meet with Miller and possibly get a record deal."

"Don't hold your breath, Edward," I said as I tugged on his hand. He grinned and we walked to the Hancock Building. Alice and Rose were coming with us, but not into the meeting. We rode up to the 52nd floor and walked to the offices of Twilight Recording Studios. We were met by a young receptionist. We explained that we were there for a meeting with Miller O'Leary. She said for us to have a seat and that he would be with us in a few moments. We sat down. Edward and I were on the couch in the waiting room. Emmett was leaning against a wall, nibbling on his fingernails nervously. Jasper calmly sat in a chair, with Alice on his lap. Rose was near Emmett, sitting in the other chair.

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We waited in the reception area for a few moments before a young, strawberry blond haired man came out with a impish grin and impeccably tailored suit. "I'm looking for Edward Cullen, Jasper Whitlock, Emmett and Bella Swan," he said.

"That's us," Edward said as he stood up. "I'm Edward Cullen. This is my fiancée, Bella Swan. Her brother, Emmett Swan and Jasper Whitlock."

"I'm Miller O'Leary," he introduced himself. He shook all of our hands. He led us to a large conference room and we all sat down. "Let me be the first to say that I'm impressed with what you've done so far. You have quite a fan base in the New York area. Several fan sites have popped up on the internet and they are filled with videos of your bands' performances."

"Thank you, Miller," Edward said quietly. "We didn't even realize that there were fan sites on the internet. Kellan mentioned that we had individual fan pages on Facebook after your phone call last week. That surprised us."

"You're hot. Let me tell you what I see," Miller said as he sat forward in his seat. "Four college students who are incredibly talented and incredibly good looking. You can make some great money. The vocals that I've heard are amazing. The chemistry between you and Bella is unreal. Here's what I'm proposing: we want you to make a demo recording with our record studio. Work with our musicians and writers to create a sound that is uniquely 'Breaking Midnight.'"

"I've written some things," Edward said, blushing. "We've never performed any of my music."

"Well, when you come to create your demo, bring what you've written and we will record it. Do you have any questions?" Miller asked.

"When will this happen? And where?" I asked.

"We have a recording studio in New York. I know that you all are students at Emerson University and so that would be the closest location. We will work

## La Cantante

with you in regards to when," Miller answered. "Any other questions?"

"If we make this demo, does this mean that we are contractually bound to your recording studio?" I questioned.

"Good question. I would hope that you would choose to stay with us. However, the demo would belong to us, but you would be free to go elsewhere," Miller smiled. "If you want, I can have a contract drawn up explaining that. You can have a lawyer look it over if it would put you at ease."

"That would be great," Edward said quietly.

"Anything else?" Miller pressed.

"I don't think so," Edward replied.

"Well then. It was a pleasure meeting you and I look forward to working with you and your band, Breaking Midnight," Miller said as he held out his hand to all of us again. We shook it and he led us out to the reception area. He asked us to leave an address where he could send the contract and he said he would call later on next week to set up some rehearsal time.

I shook my head in shock. A record deal?

*Is this for real?*

**A/N: Hmmm...Royce is guilty (YAY!), Edward is rebuilding his relationship with Senior (YAY...perhaps?), Breaking Midnight might get a record deal (YAY!)...**

**Up next, back to school.**

# To Record Deal or To Not Record Deal

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 85: To Record Deal or To Not Record Deal?

### EPOV

"Well then. It was a pleasure meeting you and I look forward to working with you and your band, Breaking Midnight," Miller said as he held out his hand to all of us again. We shook it and he led us out to the reception area. He asked us to leave an address where he could send the contract and he said he would call later on next week to set up some rehearsal time.

"Is this really happening?" Emmett mused.

"Is what really happening?" Alice chirped.

We all stared at each other, our mouths gaping like guppies. I caught Bella's eyes and she was in total disbelief. I could imagine my face looked the same as hers. Possibly a record deal? With Twilight Recording Studios? The biggest recording studio in the United States. Holy crap!

I gathered myself and nodded to the elevator. We gave the receptionist a wave and headed down to the main level of the Hancock Building.

"Is what really happening?" Alice insisted. "Edward! Bella! Come on, someone say something!"

## La Cantante

"Twilight Recording Studios wants to cut a demo with us," I said quietly, barely above a whisper.

"What?" Rose asked.

"Twilight wants to cut a demo with us," I said louder, still not believing what just happened. "Miller, the executive, was very impressed with what he heard and what he saw and he wants to work with us."

"Shut the fuck up," Rose said. "Are you serious?"

"As a heart attack," I said, looking at Rose. "However, I don't want to put too much stock into what he said. He could be just trying to finagle us into a bad contract."

"I don't think so, Edward," Alice said as she put her arm around my shoulders. "I have a..."

"Feeling. I know, Alice. You always have a feeling," I teased her, kissing her cheek. "What do you guys think?"

"I'm in shock," Bella said. "It almost seems too good to be true, you know?"

"Why, Isabelly? We're fucking talented. Why shouldn't we get noticed?" Emmett boomed. "We've been dealt enough drama this year. We need something good. Getting this record deal will definitely be good."

"It hasn't been ALL drama, Emmett," Bella said as she smacked his chest. "You met Rose. I met Edward. Jasper and Alice found each other."

"I know it hasn't been ALL drama, Isabelly. But it would be nice to have a few months without a Jacob occurrence or evil parents or shit...you understand what I'm saying?" Emmett whined.

"Yes, Em. I get it," she laughed. "I'm still leery."

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"Me too," I said, lacing my fingers with Bella's. "Before we commit to anything, I'll have Jenks look over the contract with a fine-toothed comb. I really don't want to be looped into something binding."

"Wise man," Bella said, kissing my cheek. I was having none of that. I captured her chin and caressed my lips against hers.

We caught a cab and headed back to the hotel to change before we headed to *Spring Awakening*. I had seen it on Broadway, but Bella, Jasper and Emmett hadn't seen it at all. We went to dinner at Italian Village and then went to the theater. It was phenomenal. Probably better than the Broadway version that I saw with my family. Afterward, we went back to the hotel and went to sleep. We had an early flight tomorrow back to New York. As much as I didn't want to stay in Chicago, I didn't want to leave either. It felt nice to be close to my mom and in some weird way, to my father. I was not fully ready to forgive him for what he did, but we made huge strides in reestablishing our relationship. I am okay with him not being my 'dad,' but I did want him in my life, in some way. Bella, in her infinite wisdom, helped me realize that.

*God, I love her.*

We were up before our alarm and getting ready to head out to O'Hare. It was sad, packing up our stuff and heading back to school. This spring break was full of emotional ups and downs. Rose's rapist got his ass handed to him on a platter and she got her closure. I saw my father and nearly had a nervous breakdown. However, the constant in both situations was my love. My Bella. She was a rock for both me and Rose. I know I could never do enough to repay her for her kindness and love. I will spend the rest of my days making it up to her.

Amun drove us to the airport. *Does this guy ever sleep?* I gave him a huge tip from all of us. We pooled all of our cash and gave him over \$200 in a tip when he dropped us off. He got a bit teary eyed and said that he appreciated it. His family was going through some dire financial straits and this would help him tremendously. He and his wife, Kebi, had a baby that was in the NICU and his insurance only covered so much. His gig as a driver for the W was not his full

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time job. He worked as banker and he needed to make more money to cover the costs. Before we left, I asked what hospital his baby was at. He reluctantly told me that they were at Children's Memorial. I clapped my hand on his shoulder and mentally decided to help out this kind, hard-working man. I couldn't give much, but I wanted to give something.

We got through security and were waiting for our flight to be called. "You're a good man, Edward Cullen."

"Thanks," I said to my love. "Why am I a good man?"

"I can see the hamster moving in your head. You want to help Amun," she said, running her fingers through my hair. "It's hard to not think about what they're going through. So, you're a good man. A kind heart. A sexy body. A huge cock."

"Fuck me, Bella," I growled. "You can't say stuff like that in public and not expect consequences."

Bella pressed her lips to my ear, licking the shell, "Mile High Club, baby," she purred.

"Holy hell," I squeaked. I looked at Bella and she gave me a smirk. I kissed her pouty lips and pondered her request. Her conquest, I should say. I squirmed in my seat, trying to subtly adjust my boner that cropped up from nowhere.

*Well, not nowhere. You're sex goddess fiancée wants to join the Mile High Club. Admit it, you want to!*

God, I do. Fuck, my name is Edward Cullen and I'm a sex addict. Thanks to my insatiable and gorgeous fiancée.

Bella sat back in her seat and took out a book. She crossed her legs and popped in her ear buds, losing herself in her book. I sat back in my chair, leaning my head on the window. Bella traced idle circles on my knee and it was driving me insane. I looked at her and she gave me a sweet smile. She kissed my cheek



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and turned back to her book. I just groaned. She was really going to be the death of me. She looked all innocent.

But she's not.

*Bella Swan. Sex Goddess.*

Fuuuuuuuuuck!

Over the speakers, our flight was called. Bella and I headed onto the plane and settled into our seats. We waited until the plane was filled and it taxied to the runway. The large jet lumbered down the runway and took off effortlessly. Bella was still engrossed in her book. At some point she took out a pen. She scribbled something on a sheet of paper and slipped it into my hand as she crawled over me to go to the bathroom.

*Wait about a minute and knock three times on the bathroom door. Prepared to have the most intense orgasm at 35,000 feet. Love you, Bella.*

I blinked and looked around the cabin. The flight attendants were in the back preparing for the drink service. I looked at my watch and waited for a moment. I got up and walked to the bathroom, knocking three times on the door. The door opened up and Bella grabbed my hand, pulling me into the cramped space. She locked the door behind me and reached up to kiss me. Her eagerness was surprising and I loved it. I returned her kisses with excitement, lifting her onto the small counter of the bathroom. She was wearing a skirt and I chuckled.

"What are you laughing at, Edward?" Bella asked as she kissed my cheeks, moving down my jaw.

"The fact that you are wearing a skirt. Were you planning this all along, Bella?" I asked as I bit down on her earlobe.

"Maybe," she said coyly. Bella reached for my belt buckle and quickly undid it. I reached up her skirt and pulled down her panties. I put her underwear into my

pocket of my jeans with a wink. She rolled her eyes and pushed my jeans down my legs, stopping right above my knees. Her tiny hand wrapped around my cock and she began pumping. I groaned and leaned forward. I captured her lips with mine, pulling her toward me. I lined up my cock with her entrance and slid into my love. Her warmth surrounded me and it felt fucking amazing. "God, Edward. You feel so good," she breathed in my ear. "So big. Stretching my pussy so much."

I almost came at her words. Bella was always pretty reserved when it came to talking dirty. I was more of a potty mouth than her. "You have no idea what hearing your sweet mouth saying those things do to me, Bella. So fucking good," I said as I started moving in and out of her. "We need to be quiet though."

Bella moaned and pulled my lips to meet hers. Our mouths moved in tandem, caressing each other. Her tongue slipped in between my lips and danced with mine. I reached between us and rubbed my fingers over her sensitive bundle of nerves. With my other arm, I picked up her leg and angled her body so I could reach deeper inside. I could feel her muscles flutter around me and I knew she was close. Her kisses were getting more ardent and she was breathing heavily. I removed my mouth from hers, biting down on her earlobe. "Let go, Bella. Come around my cock," I breathed against her ear. At my command, her pussy clenched down around me and she threw her head back. I kissed her, quelling her impending screams. I kept moving until I met my own release. Bella kept her lips moving with mine as I rode out my orgasm. I kissed her sweetly and put my forehead against hers. "You will be the death of me, Bella."

"But what a way to go, Edward," she giggled. "Admit it. You enjoyed this."

I looked at her, pulling my bottom lip between my teeth. She arched a brow, holding my gaze. I chuckled and nodded. As much as I enjoyed being buried in her tight pussy, I pulled out of her. I grabbed my jeans and readjusted myself. Bella held out her hand. "Panties, please."

I pouted, "I want to keep 'em."

## La Cantante

"Edward, I'm wearing a skirt. We just made love. Wait, fucked in a bathroom. With no condom. Leakage," she said as she held out her hand. "Squishy."

"Fuck," I grumbled. I dug into my pockets and handed her panties. "Fine."

She plucked from my hands and slipped them on her body. "Thank you, Edward. I love you," she said as she hopped off the counter. I quickly washed my hands and juttied my bottom lip out. "I'll give them to you when we get home, you perv."

"Thank you, Bella. I love you, baby," I said with a crooked grin. She turned me around and pushed me out of the bathroom. I walked back to our seats with a shit-eating grin on my face. I reached into Bella's carry on and took out my book. Bella came out a few minutes later, crawling over me, giving me a wink and she leaned her head on my shoulder. Within a few moments, she was out. I kissed her forehead and settled into my book.

The flight landed and we headed to the baggage claim. Alice gave me a smirk, ruffling my hair. Jasper giggled. Emmett looked, well, pissed. I pointed to Bella, with a look of fear in my face. Rosalie guffawed and smacked Emmett on the back of the head, telling him that Bella was a grown woman, capable of fucking in a stinky airplane bathroom if she wanted to. Bella blushed and hid behind me, whimpering.

*And my sex goddess is gone. Back is the blushing Bella. I love her too.*

xx LC xx

When we got back to our apartment, in our mailbox, there was a letter from the university. It was from the office of Academic Integrity. We scanned the letter, and it was a notice from Dr. Gianetti. He was requesting Bella to come to his office on Tuesday after two. Bella begged me to come with her and of course I was going to.

Classes resumed, much to our chagrin. We received final projects and study guides for finals. Bella also received a letter from the music department,

## La Cantante

formally inviting her to sing in the Honors Recital in April. She was going to perform her piece from fall juries. She pleaded with me to accompany her, as I did during juries. I couldn't deny her anything. I said yes. It wouldn't be fair for her to find another accompanist last minute. That and I would feel like the world's largest dick.

On Tuesday, after our sociology class, we headed to Dr. Gianetti's office for Bella's meeting with him. She was nervous. I know that she didn't do anything wrong, but my love never liked conflict. Ever. Getting her biology professor in trouble was the epitome of conflict. I did all I could to calm her nerves, but she was nibbling her fingernails and pacing outside Dr. Gianetti's office.

"Do you want some water, sweetie?" Raul asked.

"No thanks," Bella said tersely. "I'm good."

"You're just peachy, Bella," I snorted. "Sit down and relax, love. You're making me nervous."

"What if I'm stuck with that grade? I don't fail, Edward," she said as she huffed down on a chair. "It's like asking Emmett to perform at vocal juries without having any voice lessons. It's not right."

"Bella, hopefully Dr. Gianetti will understand your plight," I said, taking her hands in mine. She jostled her leg and her gaze implored me. "It will be alright, my love."

"I hope so," she whispered. "Compared to *everything* that has happened this year. This is what makes me the most upset? What the hell is wrong with me?"

"I think that in all of the craziness that you endured, your schoolwork was something you could control. Now, it's out of your control and it's driving you bat shit crazy," I surmised. "Haddon is a prick. I hated him as an advisor. I hate him for fucking with your GPA."

## La Cantante

The phone rang on Raul's desk and he spoke quietly. "Bella, you can go in now," he said with a smile.

Bella blew out a breath and gave me a tight grin. I stood up with her and we walked to Dr. Gianetti's office. She knocked hesitantly and we heard a quiet voice usher us in. Dr. Gianetti was sitting at his desk and there was someone in the chair opposite him. Dr. Haddon turned and he sneered at my Bella. She shrank back, grasping my hand. I gave her a reassuring squeeze and we walked toward Dr. Gianetti.

"How was your spring break, Bella?" Dr. Gianetti asked.

"It was interesting," Bella answered quietly. "We went to Chicago. One of my old roommates was subpoenaed in a criminal trial and it was over our spring break. We all decided to go out of solidarity for her."

"Did you get a chance to see the city?"

"A bit. Edward used to live there and he showed us around," Bella said with a grin. "How about you?"

"Well, being an administrator of the university, I don't get a break while you guys are off. However, I did spend some time with my family on the lighter days in the office," he smiled. "Now, I bet you are curious as to why you were called back here."

Bella nodded and sat down in the chair. I pulled up another one and held her hand. She gave me a worried smirk. I tried to reassure her, but it wasn't happening.

"I discussed your complaint about your test with Dr. Haddon. Why don't you explain to him what you said to me?" Dr. Gianetti encouraged.

"Well," Bella began, nibbling on her lip, "It don't think that it's fair for me to be assessed on something that I was not present for. I was in the hospital, unconscious for two days. My doctor would not medically release me. It's not

## La Cantante

right for me to be tested on something that I didn't receive instruction on. I used this example outside with Edward. It's like asking a non-music major to perform vocal juries without any voice lessons or preparation. You're setting them up to fail. I did receive the notes from Alice, but it's not the same as being in the classroom. Asking questions. Discussing with my classmates or with you."

"I see your point, Bella," Dr. Haddon said coldly. "I gave you an opportunity to take the class over the summer."

"Dr. Haddon, I don't live locally. My home is near Seattle. I can't exactly take classes over the summer on a whim," she said, her cheeks flushing pink. "I am planning on moving her permanently, but I have to move out of my home in Seattle before I can do that. Summer school, at least not this summer, is not an option."

"Dr. Haddon, you gave Bella the opportunity to make up the points from the missing lab assignments, correct?" Dr. Gianetti asked.

"Yes. She wrote paper about the pros and cons of using animals for biology labs. It was well written. I don't agree with her stance, but I graded it based on her academic prowess," Dr. Haddon said.

"What did she get on the paper?"

"I got a low B," Bella mumbled. "My paper was better than a low B."

"Mr. Cullen, you used to be a pre-med major. Did you read Ms. Swan's paper?" Dr. Gianetti asked.

I didn't expect to be called into this argument, but I needed to voice my opinion since it was asked of me. "Yes, I did. I proofread it and Bella offered some very intriguing points that were backed up with facts. Her paper has since changed my opinion on using animals in the biology classroom. It was not 'B' work. She utilized many terms and techniques that I used in my papers as a pre-med major. I received 'A's on those."

## La Cantante

"Dr. Haddon, do you feel that Bella is receiving preferential treatment due to her injury?" Dr. Gianetti asked, his eyes flashing with anger.

"Yes. I get that she was in a car accident and was hospitalized. However, the school should not have to bend over backwards to appease one student's needs," Dr. Haddon snapped.

Bella bristled. "Have you ever heard of the American's with Disabilities Act? What if I was in a wheel chair? Would you make me stand up, even if I couldn't? You call yourself an educator. If you were, you would accommodate to meet the needs of your students," Bella growled. "I made up my work. Quite well and before the due date you gave me. My other professors worked with me to help me get caught up. The only one who wouldn't is you. If you keep my grade as it is, I will be contacting Dear Volturi and filing a formal complaint against you."

Dr. Haddon glared at Bella. His nostrils flared and he looked pissed. "You don't know what you are talking about. I've been a teacher for over fifteen years," he snarled. "I know how to modify and accommodate."

"Then why did I receive an 'F' on my practical? I wasn't there for most of the lab. I shouldn't be assessed on what I was not present for," Bella countered.

"Let's calm down," Dr. Gianetti said. "Here's my proposal. Bella, you will need to write a 15 to 20 page paper about a recent development in the medical community. It could be about a new drug, new medical testing procedure, anything related to medicine or biology. It will be due during finals week. This grade will make up the missing work from the lab and the grade for the practical. It will also be graded by Dr. Haddon's department chair, Dr. Timmerman. He was supposed to teach your biology section, but had to back out due to health concerns. I have sent over your paper from the earlier assignment so he can gauge your knowledge of this subject matter. I realize that you are music major, but this is the proposal that Dr. Haddon and I discussed. The other option is to take the class over the summer."

## La Cantante

"I'll write the paper," Bella said. "I can't take summer school. I'm moving out of my home in Seattle and getting married. It's not feasible. Can Dr. Timmerman also assess my original paper as well?"

"That seems like a fair compromise," Dr. Gianetti said. "Your grade will be what Dr. Timmerman gives you. It could go higher or lower. We'll see. Dr. Haddon, do you want to add anything else?"

"No," he snapped.

"Fine. You're done," Dr. Gianetti said curtly. He nodded to the door and Dr. Haddon got up with a huff. We watched as he skulked to the door, slamming it shut. "Good lord, that man is a pain in the ass."

"Dr. Gianetti," Bella squeaked.

"He is! He's a full-blown professor and we're trying to get him out of here. Yours is the most recent complaint against him," Dr. Gianetti said as he ran his hands over his face. "I have a couple from you, as well, Mr. Cullen."

"He was a horrible advisor," I grumbled.

"If he crosses the line again, he will be removed from the staff. However, for now, you're stuck with him," Dr. Gianetti said. "It's not going to be easy. Let me know if anything happens. Such as studying for a test and then totally bombing it, when you know you got the answers correct."

"Got it, Dr. Gianetti," Bella said.

"I'm truly sorry, Bella. You shouldn't be penalized for being sick and in the hospital," Dr. Gianetti said sympathetically. "He's wrong. He knows he's wrong. But he's letting his opinion blind him. If you fight against him, I'll be on your side. Trust me. I want him out of here."

"Thank you for your help, Dr. Gianetti," Bella smiled. "I'll start working on that paper tonight."



## La Cantante

"I'm sure you will," Dr. Gianetti winked. "Good luck, Bella."

We got up and headed out of Dr. Gianetti's office. Bella leaned heavily against me. I could feel her tears on my sleeve of my shirt. We rode down the elevator and walked outside. The weather had finally improved and the sun was shining. I pulled Bella onto a bench. I held her sweet face in my hands, my heart breaking at her tears. "Baby, talk to me."

"It's a fair compromise. I shouldn't be crying," she said, pulling away. She wiped her tears and drew her legs up onto the bench. "Even from the grave, Jacob is fucking with me. Because of his sick obsession with me, I'm getting screwed by my professors."

"Haddon is a pompous ass who is so far involved in academia, he wouldn't know how to modify a test if it bit him in nose," I said. "I'll help you with your paper. I have a few old papers that you could use the citations or you could ask my dad for his help."

"I know. Thanks, Edward," she said. She pulled out her sunglasses and slipped them over her nose. She scooted closer to me and laid her head on my shoulder. "Why are things so fucking difficult?"

"Makes life interesting, love," I said, kissing her forehead. As we sat there, my phone began ringing from my pocket. I looked at the caller ID and I didn't recognize the number. "Hello?"

"Is this Edward Cullen?"

"Yes, this is he," I answered. "To whom am I speaking with?"

"Miller O'Leary. You are so stuffy on the phone," he laughed.

"I usually am with people I don't know," I smiled. "What can I do for you?"

"Did you get the contract yet?" Miller asked.

## La Cantante

"Not yet. However, I haven't checked the mail today. I will when I get home. When did you send it?"

"I typed it up and had it in the mail on Saturday. I'm very excited to work with you and *Breaking Midnight*," Miller enthused.

"Me too," I said. "However, before we commit to anything, I will have my lawyer look over the contract. I just want to cover our bases."

"Understandable. There is something that you should know. I played your live recording to the higher-ups and they are chomping at the bit. The combination of your sound and voices are unique. You and your fiancée work really well together, vocally. Please consider my proposal, Edward," Miller said fervently.

"I'll have my attorney look over the paperwork and we'll let you know hopefully by the beginning of next week," I said diplomatically.

"Sounds good. Let me know if you have any questions. Talk to you soon, Edward," Miller said. He ended the call and I slipped my phone into my pocket. "You ready, love? We should have a contract from Miller in our mailbox."

"Yeah. Can we stop at the library before we head back though? I want to get some information for this paper I have to write," Bella grumbled.

"What are you going to write about?" I asked.

"I'm not sure. I'm thinking about something with cancer, since my dad was recently diagnosed with it," Bella said sadly. "I promise, no more than an hour."

"No big deal, love. I have to do some work on my final project for education. I'll work on that while you are researching," I said, kissing her sweet mouth. "Hmmm, so soft. I love you lips, Bella."

## La Cantante

"I love more than just your lips, Edward," she giggled against my mouth. "I love all of you."

"I love you even more," I sighed.

"We're nauseating, you know that?" Bella laughed.

"Yes. Yes, we are," I replied with a smirk. "At least we know it. Let's go get educated or some shit."

**A/N: So there you have it..possible record deal and some closure with Bella's practical grade. Up next, recording session and some wedding fun.**

# Decisions

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 86: Decisions

### BPOV

When we got back from the library, Edward checked our mailbox. As he said, the contract drawn up by Miller and Twilight Recording Studios was in there. Edward took a cursory look as we stood in the mailroom.

"I'm going to fax this to Jenks from the apartment office. Why don't you head up to the apartment, Bella?" Edward said. "Love you."

"Love you, too, handsome," I said, kissing his scruffy cheek. I pulled out my keys, walking to the elevators. I balanced my books and pressed the button, heading up to our floor. I unlocked our door, placing my keys on the table near the doorway. I put my books onto the cocktail table and decided to begin making dinner. Our 'one hour' excursion to the library had ended up being nearly three hours. Edward was insanely patient as he worked on his education project. I sat on one of the computers in the library, decided on what to write for this stupid paper for Haddon.

*Stupid prick. Evil man who doesn't know how to accommodate to his students' needs. GRRRRRRRR!*

I pulled out the ingredients for a chicken stir fry and began chopping the vegetables. I was almost done chopping the peppers when my phone shrilled from my bag in the living room. I ran and picked it up. It was Charlie.

## La Cantante

"Hey Dad," I said into the phone.

"How did you know it was me?" Charlie squeaked.

"It's a wonderful invention. It's called Caller ID. On the phone, your phone number appears on the screen," I giggled. "How are you doing?"

"I'm good. Very good. Actually, that's why I wanted to call you, baby girl," Charlie said. I could hear him smile over the phone. "I just came from my doctor's appointment and all the cancer is gone from my system. I'm in remission."

"That's wonderful news, Dad. I'm so happy," I breathed, holding my hand to my chest. "When can you go back to work?"

"I go back to work after Easter. I'll be the Chief of the Forks Police Department. However, the heavy duty stuff will be handled by the new deputies I hired and I get to be the administrative man. I'll be in the field, but not as much. It's a compromise I made with the mayor. I'm so happy to be done with private investigating. That just sucked," Charlie grumbled. "I was shocked how many times I had people approach me to watch their cheating spouses. It was insane."

"I can imagine, Dad," I chuckled. "I miss you, Daddy."

"I miss you, too, Bells. I know you are going to your mom's for Easter, but I wish I could see you before that," he sighed. "I was looking forward to seeing you over spring break, but when Rose's trial came up, I knew it wasn't going to happen."

"You could always come out here," I giggled.

"I will try and come for your final University Singers concert. When is it?" Charlie asked.

## La Cantante

"May 14th," I answered. "It's a Saturday. We're performing all of our pieces that we're singing in Italy."

"Oh yeah, that's right. When's that trip?" Charlie said. I heard quiet shuffling in the background.

"We leave on May 23rd, which is the weekend after finals and return on June 6th," I replied. The door opened and Edward walked in, giving me a crooked smirk. I winked at him as I listened to my dad grumble about me being so busy. "I'm not that busy, Dad."

"Yes, you are, Bella. I'm surprised you haven't gotten sick or caught pneumonia or something," Charlie laughed.

"Actually, I did get pneumonia. Two weeks before spring break. It sucked," I said.

"Damn, Bella," Charlie sighed. "You just can't catch a break."

"Well, I did catch a break. I found Edward," I smiled. "He's been amazing."

"He's a good man, Bella. I've never met anybody with their head on their shoulders at such a young age. He truly is remarkable and head over heels in love with you, baby girl."

"The feeling's mutual," I snorted. "Listen, I have a paper to write and I'm in the middle of cooking dinner. I'll talk to you soon."

"Sounds good, baby girl. Love you," Charlie said.

"Love you, too, Dad," I replied, hanging up the phone. Edward had come into the kitchen and was sitting on the counter. He nibbled on some of the veggies that I had cut up as he waited for me to finish my phone call. "My dad's in remission."

"That's wonderful, Bella," he smiled. "Alice had a feeling he'd be okay."

## La Cantante

"Alice and her damn feelings," I said, rolling my eyes. I finished making dinner and we ate in a comfortable silence. Edward did the dishes and I went into the living room, beginning my research for biology assignment. With Edward's guidance and Carlisle's suggestions, I managed to choose my topic. Now, I had to read the journal articles and decipher their meaning. I was about halfway through the first article when I got frustrated and tossed the papers and my highlighter across the room. "I don't understand this shit."

Edward walked out of the kitchen, picking up my mess. He read the first few lines of the article and sighed. "That's because you chose a very technical article to read. Ignore the article itself. Just read the literature review. It's a very detailed synopsis of the article and will provide the necessary information. If you need clarification, then go to that section of the article," Edward said, handing me my supplies. "How many citations do you need?"

"I don't know. I'm going to go with ten. Seems like a reasonable number," I said, accepting my supplies with a huff. "I'll email Dr. Gianetti tomorrow for clarification."

"For tonight, you need to relax," Edward said. He grabbed my hands and lifted me off the couch, slinging me over his shoulder. I squealed and we went into our bedroom to relax the best way ever.

*Making love with my fiancé. God, I love him!*

xx LC xx

The rest of the week was uneventful. We went to classes and did our school thing. On Thursday, Felix was quite morose. He told us that the gig that we had been preparing for was canceled due to lack of involvement. We were bummed, but didn't let it faze us. Emerson Express only had one more performance and that was our spring concert in May. It was an outdoor concert in the band shell of the community near Emerson. In addition to our regular songs, we had several students do duets, solos and small ensembles. Felix also insisted that Edward and I do "Fever." I was still hesitant, but I could see Edward's excitement in his green eyes at the prospect of dancing and

## La Cantante

performing together. Who am I to deny him?

On Friday, Jasper got the t-shirts we ordered for Breaking Midnight. We were going to sell them at our next gig at Eclipse, which was next week. Kellan called us earlier, explaining that the band we filled in for wanted to perform. We happily gave up our time slot on Saturday for this band. It worked out for the best as Edward and I had some wedding details to figure out: Edward's tux, flowers, and DJ. We made appointments for all these and they were all on Saturday.

After University Singers, Edward got a call from Jenks. He said that the contract that was sent over from Twilight Recording Studios was legit. He also said that there were no loopholes and it would be beneficial for us to work with them. He did press that we shouldn't use any of our material during the demo recording session. The company could say that they wrote the music and steal the rights of our creations. Edward was pissed at that, but I pushed him in saying that we don't want another band singing his music and not get paid for it.

As we drove home from school, Edward called Miller. Their call was short, but the gist of it was Edward saying that we would cut a demo with Twilight. It would be an extended release, with five songs, all original work. We would be working with the musicians at the recording studio to choose and create our songs. We set up an appointment with Miller and some other executives for next Saturday. They wanted us to come in Friday, but we reminded them that we were still college students. We had classes and other commitments. Thankfully, Miller and the other executives were willing to come in on Saturday. So, that was the plan.

On Sunday, Edward and I were lounging on the couch. I was doing some reading for sociology and Edward was work on his education project. We heard the intercom buzz and I got up to answer it.

"Hello?"



## La Cantante

"You need to go shopping, Bella," Alice chirped. "Get dressed and meet Rose and me down here in five minutes. Starting now!"

"Oh lord," I grumbled. I darted into the bedroom and grabbed a pair of jeans. I pulled my hair into a ponytail, applying some lip gloss and mascara. "You sister is evil, Edward."

"And it took this long to figure it out?" Edward laughed. "Where is she taking you?"

"Shopping. For what, I have no flipping clue," I snorted. "Do you want me to pick up something for dinner?"

"Hmmm, Chinese," Edward said, arching a brow. "I'm in the mood for General Tso's chicken."

"You may be, but what it does to your stomach, I hate," I said, wrinkling my nose.

"What are you insinuating, Bella?" Edward warned.

"What comes out of you, rivals the stench of Emmett," I said. Edward growled and tossed a pillow at my back as I danced away. "Love you!"

"Meanie!" Edward grumbled.

I chuckled as I grabbed my keys and purse. From my pocket, my phone chirped.

*Love you, too. I can't believe you said that! - E*

*Believe it. I will get your Chinese. Just not General Tso's chicken - B*

*Ugh, fine. Have fun, il mio cantante - E*

## La Cantante

I slipped my phone into my pocket and headed down to the main level of our apartment complex. I saw Alice's Audi near the curb and I headed out to it. Rose was sitting in the back seat and I got in the front. We drove to the mall and proceeded to buy a ton of cute spring dresses and light-weight clothes. Alice and Rose got most of it, but I managed to pick up a few dresses and some new underwear that Edward would like. As we were at Nordstrom's, trying on shoes, I called in our dinner order at the Chinese restaurant that we like. As much as my nose would hate it, I buckled at got Edward his request.

We picked up our food. I invited the girls up to eat with us, but they had to do some homework. I picked up my purchases and dinner, going up to our apartment. Edward must have seen me get out of the car, as I was out of the elevator; he was picking up my bags and tugging my arm to the apartment. I chuckled at his enthusiasm. His eyes lit up when he found his dinner. He dipped me low, covering my face with kisses. When he righted me, I reached into my pocket and handed him some 'Beano.' His face turned pink and he popped a pill.

*My nostrils thank you.*

After dinner, I began working on my outline for my research paper for Haddon. I read all of the articles, with Edward's help. He was able to help me with some difficult medical terms and concepts that were above my head. What he couldn't do, we called Carlisle. As I was working, Edward got a phone call. He bristled and I could tell it was Senior. They had a tense conversation, but Edward didn't just hang up on him or ignore the call. I was so proud of him. By the end over their phone conversation, Edward was almost laughing. Almost...but not quite. Their relationship was slowly being mended. Edward walked to me as he was finishing his phone call with his father. He sat down next to me, pulling me into his lap. I could hear Senior's voice through the tinny speaker of Edward's phone. I ran my fingers through Edward's hair, providing him comfort when he needed it. He captured my hand and kissed my palm, his jade eyes meeting mine.

"Senior, I've got to go. I have some homework to do and then early classes tomorrow," Edward said, his eyes deepening in color. Senior sputtered and told

## La Cantante

him to have a good night, after he said he loved him. Edward opened his mouth, but didn't say anything. The phone line went dead. "I don't know if I'll ever get used to hearing those words from him. It's so foreign."

"He does love you. He had a piss-poor way of showing it, but he does. Talk to me, Edward," I said, placing my hands on his cheeks.

"I'm fine, beautiful. Happy that I have you. You always know what I need," he said, leaning forward, caressing my lips with his. I angled my head and deepened the kiss, gliding my tongue languidly in his warm mouth. Edward's arms snaked around my waist and he pulled me flush to his body. "I want you, Bella."

"What do you want, Edward?" I mumbled against his lips.

"Everything with you," he replied huskily.

I pulled away and looked into his green orbs. "What do you want me to do to you, Edward? It's all about you tonight," I said, brushing his hair off his forehead.

He stared into my eyes, his chest heaving and his strong arms pulling me closer, trapping his arousal between us. "Your mouth, Bella," he growled. "Then your pussy, baby."

"Done," I said, crashing my lips against his. I reached for his shirt, pulling it over his head. My fingers raked up and down his strong muscles of his abdomen. I could feel them contract under my touch. I rotated my hips over his growing cock and I heard him moan against my mouth. I removed my lips from his, nibbling along the column of his neck. I weaved my fingers in through his hair and pulled his head to one side. I attached my mouth to the crook of his neck, suckling along his soft skin there. Edward reached under my t-shirt and ran his fingers along my ribcage. He eased the shirt up and pulled back. The shirt was torn from my body and thrown onto the floor.

## La Cantante

I got up from Edward's lap, kneeling on the floor. I kissed down his chest and unbuckled his belt. I unbuttoned his jeans at a torturous rate, causing Edward to whimper and squirm on our couch. My lips played on his chest, kissing and licking his nipples. My fingers moved down to his tattoo and I traced the black lines etched in his skin. I reached the waistband of his pants and eased them, along with his boxers, down his long, strong legs. His erection was bobbing and I wanted nothing but to wrap my mouth around it. So I did.

I put my hand around Edward's cock and his hips bucked. "So hard, Edward," I purred. "Is that all for me?"

"Fuck, yes," he said, looking into my eyes. I held his gaze as I put my lips around his pulsing member. I swirled my tongue around the head of his cock and he fell back against the couch, running his fingers through his hair. With my hand, I began pumping, enjoying the feel of his steel hard dick in my mouth and against my fingers. With my other hand, I massaged his balls. I enjoyed the power that I had over him when he was like this. I could reduce my strong, confident fiancé into a post-coital puddle of goo with my hands and my mouth. I moved my mouth further along his shaft and began bobbing my head at a slow rhythm. Edward's hips moved at the same tempo as my mouth and hands. His fingers moved my face, gently caressing my cheeks. His eyes were filled with desire but appreciation and love at the same time. I reached up with my hand and linked my fingers with his. I dragged my teeth along the underside of his shaft and he groaned. Edward's mouth was hanging open and he was close.

"Bella, I need to feel you. I need to be inside you. Please, baby," he whimpered, imploring me with his eyes. I released his cock and crawled up his body. Edward's lips were on mine faster than a bolt of lightning. They were soft and hot against my mouth, moving passionately in tandem with my lips. He reached behind me and unclasped my bra. His mouth moved down my body and he laid me on the couch. I shrieked a bit when my back hit the cold leather. Edward chuckled against my skin as he pulled one of my breasts into his mouth, sucking and nibbling on the nipple. His hands moved to my jeans and he unbuttoned them quickly. Before I realized it, they were off my legs along with my panties and Edward was running his fingers into my core. "So wet,

baby. Does going down on me turn you on?"

"Seeing you feel good turns me on, Edward," I breathed. "Please, I need you."

"Done," he smirked as he sat up. I straddled his legs and lined his cock up to my entrance. My eyes flickered to his and we watched each other as I slid down his hardened length. Edward's arms wrapped around me and he angled his face for a kiss. I brushed my lips against his and I began riding him. I felt a low grumble in his chest and he smiled against my face. "So good, beautiful."

I moaned and tangled my fingers into his hair. Edward's hands moved to my breasts and he gently fondled the hardened peaks of my nipples. It felt so good. He felt so good. It was slow, sweet and soothing. It was what he needed. "Does it feel good, when we make love, Edward?" I purred.

"Yes, Bella. You were made for me," he said, brushing my hair away from my face. "You're perfect."

I blushed and kissed along his jaw, focusing my attention to the soft part behind his ear. I rotated my hips and I felt his cock harden within me. It was heaven being connected this way. Edward's breath was panting on my shoulder and I could feel him try to quell his release. His arms drew me closer and there was no skin that wasn't touching. We were one being, with one mind, one body and one heart. "Let go, Edward. I love you, handsome. You are my world," I whispered in his ear.

My words were his undoing. He twitched in my body and he spilled into my body. His mouth was on my shoulder and he kissing any place that he could reach. He eventually turned my head and covered my face and mouth with hot, searing open-mouthed kisses. "You are *my* world, Bella. I will always love you. For the rest of my life and into the next," he said fervently. I smiled and wiped his slightly sweaty brow with my fingers. I kissed his soft lips, wrapping my arms around his neck. Edward stood up. I instinctually wrapped my legs around his waist. He carried us into the bathroom and ran a bath.

## La Cantante

We made love in the bathtub, the shower and finally in bed before calling it a night.

*Thank goodness for Depo-Provera.*

xx LC xx

When I woke up on Monday morning, I was sore. My legs felt like jelly and my punani was not happy with me. When I moved in the bed, I groaned. Edward snorted into his pillow. I poked my head up and smacked his ass.

"You made me this sore, sex addict," I said wryly. "Oh my punani."

"Your what?" Edward laughed.

"My punani. She is quite sore from all the loving she got yesterday," I said, rolling onto my stomach. "It was fun while it was happening, but I'll be walking funny for awhile. Thanks, Cullen."

Edward pinned me with his body, his eyes black as pitch. He had on a proud, crooked smirk. "And how many orgasms did you have yesterday?"

"I lost count after seven," I said. "You need to wipe the grin off your face, Edward. It'll be some time before we go at it like bunnies. So sore."

He narrowed his eyes and pressed kisses on my cheeks before blowing a raspberry on my neck. I squealed and pushed him off me. I scampered to the bathroom and got ready for school. As I was getting ready, Edward poked his head in the bathroom, handing me my phone. "Alice," he said with a smile. He kissed my forehead and left me to talk to his sister.

"Yes, Pixie?" I sang.

"I'm sick, Bella. I was feeling cruddy yesterday and now I have the flu. The cold-like flu. Can you make sure to get good notes for me in bio?" she asked, sounding pathetic.

## La Cantante

"Of course, Ali. Do you need anything?" I asked my voice full of concern.

"No. Jasper is taking care of me. Thanks, Bella," she said.

"No problem, Alice. Feel better, sweetie."

"I'll try. Talk to you later. Oh, by the way, be careful after biology today. I have a feeling something is going to happen. I'm not sure what, but you probably should be on the lookout," Alice said cryptically.

"Got it. Thanks for the warning. Sleep, rest, don't think," I chortled. She giggled and ended the call. I got dressed and headed into the kitchen. Edward made me a bagel and some coffee. He couldn't cook much, but he was awesome at making sure I had breakfast in the morning. He was printing something in the office and he came out, looking absolutely delicious. He wore a pair of dark, distressed jeans and a tight black sweater with a gray undershirt. On his feet were his black Chucks. "Damn," I breathed.

"What? Did I spill?" he asked, doing an inspection.

"No. You're fucking hot, Cullen," I said, gazing at the perfection that was my fiancé.

"Whatever, Bella," Edward said as he slipped his glasses on. "I'm okay."

"Hmmm," I said as I tapped my finger to my lips. "Here's what I see, stud. You're tall and lean. Not muscle-y like Emmett. However, you're not a string bean either."

"You should have seen me when I was a freshman in high school. I was scrawny and bony," he said, wrinkling his nose. "Zero body fat."

"Well, now you have the perfect amount of muscles, at least for me. You're strong, emotionally, physically and mentally. If you can heft my fat ass in lifts, you are definitely 'strong like bull,'" I giggled. Edward growled lightly, arching a brow over his glasses. "You have a gorgeous face, Edward. Very classic and I

## La Cantante

could get lost in your eyes. You're brilliant. Funny. Hella talented. I love you and you're mine. Any questions?"

"No, Bella. Thank you," he said, a blush covering his pale skin. "You are everything to me, love."

"I know," I said, standing on my tiptoes, kissing his cheek. "We got to roll, though. We have a test in theory today."

"Oh, fun," Edward said sarcastically. I rolled my eyes and grabbed his keys from his pocket. We headed downstairs and I eased the Volvo out of the parking garage. We got to school with minutes to spare. We settled into our seats for the theory test, both finishing early. Edward suggested that we head up to his practice room and rehearse my piece for the honors recital. It was next week on Friday evening. I hadn't performed it full out since vocal juries.

Edward led me in a few warm ups as my voice was still asleep. After the warm ups, we ran my piece twice before we had to go to psychology. I was not in the mood for Hafenrichter. He was such a weasel. I liked the subject he taught, but I just didn't like his teaching style. Anyhow, I'm pulling an 'A' in the class, as was Edward. We were one of the few people in the class who were doing well. We finished the marathon note-taking class that was psychology and I walked to the science building. Edward gave me a kiss before he headed to education.

I settled into a seat in the back of the room, far away from Haddon. I took out my notes and waited for class to begin. We were studying some basic zoology for the last part of the semester. We were discussing the joys of the amphibian. I took meticulous notes for Alice and I. As the class progressed, Haddon kept giving me the stink eye. I chose to ignore it. He was an evil, little man who had a major Napoleon complex. He foisted his power over his students in the form of their grades. I would not let him 'break me.' He may be my teacher, but he was wrong. I did my make up work and shouldn't be penalized for being sick and injured. He finished his lecture about the different amphibians and we were dismissed. I gathered my things and headed out of the lecture hall. I was walking out of the building when I felt a strong hand on my arm. My heart began racing and I looked up into a pair of dark, menacing eyes.



"We need to talk, Bella," he growled.

**A/N: Sorry, cliffie. Who do think it is? Jacob back from the dead? James? Sam? Seth? Leave me your comments and love! All will be resolved in the next chapter. :)**

# Broken Millers?

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 87: Broken Millers?

### EPOV

I was walking to Brandon Hall when I got a text from Alice. She told me to meet Bella at the science building. She had a 'feeling' that something was going to happen. Alice was pretty confident in her feelings and I was too. I was hightailing it to meet my love after her biology class. Education was dismissed late. I was approaching the science building when I saw the back of Bella's body. She was throwing her bag over her shoulder and moving toward Brandon. I called out to her, but she didn't hear me. I picked up the pace and was about fifty feet away when a tall, russet-skinned man approached her. He looked like Jacob, only older and bigger. He grabbed her arm and she flinched at the touch

*No. Not again. Please not again!*

I broke into a sprint and threw myself in between Bella and whoever was trying to talk to her.

"Leave her alone," I growled, shoving the tall man away from her.

"Whoa, easy buddy," he said, holding his hands up in defense. "I just want to talk to her. No harm, no foul."

"Do you want to talk, Bella?" I asked, looking at her. Her fingers were wrapped around my bicep and they were holding onto me very tightly. Her eyes were

## La Cantante

filled with fear and she was breathing heavily. She looked at me and arched a brow. "Baby?"

"What do you want, Sam?" Bella whispered.

"You know him?" I squeaked. Bella nodded and ducked her head.

"What do you want? I have to get to class," Bella said more forcefully.

"It'll take longer than a few minutes, Bella," Sam said, running a hand over his face. "It's about Billy and Jacob. You need to know what happened to them."

"I don't really care. Jacob fucked me up and he's dead. I couldn't be happier. Please, I have to go," Bella said, twining her fingers with mine. "Come on, Edward."

"Jacob was totally fucked up in the head. Crazy obsessed with you, Bells," Sam said. "I helped him find you after Christmas and when he came here."

I growled and pulled Bella behind me protectively. "You have the gall to come here and tell her that? What the fuck, *Sam*?" I sneered. "Bella, do you want to call campus security?"

"No, I just want to go," she said. "Come on."

"Okay, okay, okay," Sam relented. "I get it that you don't want to talk. However, I'm coming to say that I'm so sorry for what happened to you. When I return to Forks, I'm turning myself into the authorities. I harbored a criminal and helped him get to you. I just wanted to apologize. Truly."

"Apology not accepted," Bella snarled. "Because of you, I was placed in a horrendous situation. I was kidnapped, assaulted and in a horrific car crash. I was fucking unconscious for two days, Sam! I thought I lost EVERYTHING when Jacob took me that day. I had barely lived my life and he was ready to take it away from me. Go turn yourself in. I hope you get the maximum penalty. Chief Swan will be happy to slap on the handcuffs."

## La Cantante

Bella strode off and I glared at Sam. He appeared to be reproachful, but I couldn't care less. I followed my love and caught up with her easily. Her face was a mask of hatred, anger and pure malice. I grabbed her hand and she stopped dead and connected with my nose, sending my glasses flying. "Son of a bitch," I spat.

"Oh my God," Bella said, covering her face. "Edward! I thought you were Sam. I'm so sorry!"

I felt blood trickle down my face and I pinched the bridge of my nose, which was hurting like a mother. I walked to a bench and tried to stem the bleeding. Bella took off her scarf that she was wearing and she handed it to me. Her eyes were filling with tears and her bottom lip was trembling. "What do you want me to do, Edward? I'm so sorry."

"Nothing," I sighed. "Well, find my glasses."

Bella nodded and searched the ground. She picked up my broken frames and new tears began falling down her cheeks. "I'm horrible. So horrible."

I removed the scarf from my face and the bleeding had stopped. "Bella, stop it. You were pissed and scared. I understand why you hit. I only wish that it wasn't me. Damn woman, you got some strength. I'm impressed."

"Self defense. They taught me how to hit," Bella said sadly. "Though your head is very hard, Edward."

"I think we need to drive to visit my family. Carlisle may have to set my nose. It think it's broken," I grumbled.

"Fuck," Bella cried. "Just break up with me now. I know you hate me."

"Bella, I don't hate you. I could never hate you. Ever. I love you too much. I will never break up with you. Unless you cheat, then I might consider it. However, this was an ACCIDENT. Relax. I'll be fine," I said, cupping her cheeks with my hands.

## La Cantante

"Yeah, you need to see Carlisle," she said sadly. "You're already bruising and I can see the swelling. Also, let me pay for your new glasses. Please?"

"Bella, I am going to the eye doctor in a couple of weeks to get contacts. I'll pick a pair of cheap frames until then. Baby, please relax," I said, rubbing her cheeks with my thumbs. "Send a text to Rose or Jasper and explain what happened."

"What? That I freaked out and punched you in the nose, effectively breaking it and breaking your glasses? No thank you," she said, her eyes cast downward.

"So they can tell Eleazar," I said. "Come on, Mike Tyson."

"Shut it," she said.

She whipped out her phone and tapped out a quick text. She gave me a sad smile and got up from the bench. I followed her to the car and she drove us toward my parents' home. I called Carlisle and he told me to come into the office. He would look at the damage to my nose and if need be, he'd refer me to a specialist. Bella pulled up to his building and we headed inside. We were greeted by the receptionist and she led us into Carlisle's office. He was sitting at his desk, reading a journal.

"Holy hell," he said, his eyes widening. "Come here, Edward." He pointed to a small examination table in his office and I hopped up. Bella sat down on the couch in the office and curled up, into herself. I frowned and wanted to say something. I opened my mouth and Carlisle shook his head no. I arched a brow, feeling the pain in my face and grimaced. "Okay, Bella, did you hit straight up or did it smush into his face?"

"Up," Bella mumbled into her knees.

"Okay," Carlisle said. He examined my nose, pressing my face with gentle, probing fingers. He checked inside and led me into the x-ray suite in his office. He took a few films and looked at them critically. "It's broken. I have to set it. Do you want to be awake or out?"

"Awake please," I said, grimacing.

"It's going to hurt," Carlisle said.

"I know," I answered. Carlisle nodded and pushed me back onto the table. He stood on a lift and he placed his fingers on either side of my nose. With considerable force, he pressed down and I felt my nose pop back into place with a sickening crunch. I closed my eyes and I felt tears fall down my cheeks. Carlisle removed his hands and he looked at his work. He smiled and told me to stay still as he got me an icepack. "Bella?"

"I suck, Edward," she grumbled.

"You do not suck, beautiful," I said, looking at the blurry vision of my fiancée. "Can you come by me, please?"

"No," she cried. "I hurt you, Edward. I'm just one big walking mistake."

I got up from the examination table and felt a little woozy. I gathered my bearings and walked to my love. I sat down on the couch next to her and tried to move her from her huddled position. She wouldn't budge. "Bella," I said gently. "Please, baby. I want to see your beautiful face. It's okay. I'm fine."

Bella looked up at me and she grimaced. "No you're not. Your nose is swollen and you are already getting two black eyes. I'm failure. I fucked up and now I'm going to lose you."

"I may not look pretty, but I'm fine. Please, Bella," I said, reaching for her hands.

"Edward?" Carlisle asked. "Here's your icepack. Liza needs to speak with you at reception. Okay?"

"Okay," I said warily. I got up and held the proffered icepack.

## La Cantante

Carlisle moved closer to me and hissed in my ear, "I'll calm her down. Go into exam room one. I'll get you when I'm done."

I nodded and walked to the first exam room in the office. Liza, Carlisle's head nurse, was taking inventory in the room. "Hey Edward. Nice nose," she teased.

"Shut it," I said as I held the icepack to my face. I snarled when the cold hit my skin, but after awhile it felt good.

"What happened?" Liza asked.

"My fiancée was approached by someone from her past and she got upset. She walked away and I followed her. As I was walking toward her, I reached for her hand and she thought that I was the person from her past and she slugged me. She broke my nose," I explained.

"Oh, you better not get on her bad side," Liza laughed. "Fiancée? Wow, Edward! I remember when you were a knock-kneed little boy with braces. Now, you're getting married. Damn."

"We all grow up," I said, removing the icepack from my face. "And I wasn't knock-kneed."

"Knock-kneed AND pigeon toed. Child, you were a hot mess when you came to live with Carlisle and Esme. However, you've grown up to be a fine young man. With a hell of a shiner. Well, two of 'em," Liza laughed. "When's your wedding?"

"August 13th," I answered. "We're getting married at my parents' home."

"Where are you taking her on the honeymoon?" Liza asked.

"Isle Esme," I replied. "I went there with Carlisle, Esme and Alice the summer before my freshman year of college and it was so romantic. I always knew I wanted to take my wife there for our honeymoon."

## La Cantante

"Have you made arrangements yet?"

"I have the flights arranged and chartered a boat. I've also booked the honeymoon suite for two weeks," I said with a wistful smile.

"How can you afford this?" Liza asked. Her eyes widened and she smacked her hands over her mouth. "I'm so sorry, Edward. That was out of line."

"Liza, it's fine. I have a sizable inheritance coming to me and I'm using that to pay for the honeymoon. As much as I hate people who flaunt their money, I'm technically a trust fund baby. When I turn 21, I'll be worth millions."

"Holy hell," she whispered. "Can I make a loan? I have a teenager to get through college," she teased.

I rolled my eyes and then winced at the pain in my face. Liza gave me a stern look and put the icepack onto my face again. "Keep it there, Cullen. I'm going to finish my inventory while you ice your pretty little face. Got it?"

"Yes, ma'am," I said, giving her a salute. She elbowed me and went about her business. I sat down in the chair and leaned my head back against the wall, balancing the icepack on my nose. I closed my eyes and let the frigid pack numb my face. I heard a faint knock and Liza opened the door. I sat up and saw Bella standing in the doorway, looking petrified. "Come here, love," I said as I held out my arms.

Bella tentatively walked toward me and sat down in my lap. She looked at me with sad eyes and pouty lips. I mirrored her expression and she threw her arms around my neck, crying into my shoulder. "I'm sorry, Edward. I never meant to hurt you. I thought you were Sam..." she rambled.

"I know, love. You've already apologized. I've accepted it and we're good," I said as I wrapped my arms around her waist. "Please don't cry. I'm fine."

Bella pulled away and looked into my eyes. Her face was pulled into an adorable frown as she gently ran her fingers across my cheeks.



## La Cantante

"Bella, I'm proud of you. As silly as that sounds, you put some significant force behind that punch to do the damage you did. I'm not so hesitant to leave you unattended," I teased.

Bella snorted and rolled her eyes. "I still can't believe that I hit you, Edward. You have every right to be pissed off and never want to see me again."

"However, that will never, ever happen, my love. Besides, your brother always teased me that my face was too pretty. Perhaps a crooked nose will get him off my back," I joked.

"I liked your nose," Bella said.

"I could get a nose job. Get the Michael Jackson look," I said, raising my brows.

"Don't, Edward. Just don't," Bella giggled. "That's fifty shades of fucked up."

"So is being upset about this. I'm fine," I said as I leaned my forehead against hers. "I love you, *il mio cantante*. Please don't be sad about me."

"I love you, too, Edward," she whispered. She leaned down and kissed my lips chastely and pulled away. "Come on, we need to get you glasses so you can see. Do you have your prescription?"

"In my wallet," I said. "Then I need to go to sleep. My head is *killing* me."

"Okay, then," she replied, hopping off my lap. We walked back to Carlisle's office and he did a final inspection of my swollen nose. He told me that if I was having trouble breathing that he would put me in contact with an ear, nose and throat doctor. Carlisle gave Bella a hug and a kiss on the cheek. We headed out to the car and Bella drove us to the local Lens Crafters. We picked out a new set of frames and had them made. I only had to pay for the lenses as they were still covered by their warranty. When they asked how they broke, I lied and said that they fell apart when I was cleaning the lenses. Surprisingly enough, they believed me. Even though I had two black eyes and a swollen nose, they

believed me.

*Alrighty then...*

xx LC xx

When we got back from our excursion to get my nose fixed and new glasses, I crashed on the ride home. Bella nudged me gently and I vaguely remembered the walk upstairs to the apartment. I fell into bed and slept straight through until morning. I heard Bella getting ready for class and I shot out of bed.

"Edward, go back to sleep. You were tossing and turning all night last night. You need to rest. I'll get your assignments if we have any of them," Bella chided.

I was too tired to protest and I fell back onto the pillows with a huff. Bella left a bottle of water and some Advil on the nightstand. I gave her a weak smile. She kissed my forehead. Her brow furrowed and she darted away. She returned a few moments later with an icepack. Bella wrapped it in a towel and handed it to me. I balanced it on my nose and she said she would see me after classes. I fell back asleep after I took the Advil.

I was woken up when Bella returned from class. She teased me about staying in bed all day. I rolled my eyes, which hurt. Bella handed me a study guide for sociology and her notes from music literature. I copied them down quickly and took a nap. I felt like such a bum. However, I guess I needed it. Bella doted on me and made me dinner in bed. She made my favorite: her delicious chili. After she took my plate away, she curled up next to me and laid her head on my chest. She hadn't said more than a handful of words to me all day.

"Talk to me, beautiful," I said, running my fingers through her soft hair. "I know you're beating yourself up for hurting me."

"I know," she mumbled. "I just feel awful. How can you be okay with what happened?"

## La Cantante

"I can be okay with it because I knew you would never hurt me intentionally. Bella, you need to get over this. Have you talked to Dr. Lunes?" I asked.

"I made an appointment for tomorrow," she said, wrapping her arms around my waist. "I need her help."

"Good. I'm glad," I said, kissing her forehead.

"I'm so..." Bella began.

I pinched her lips shut with my fingers. "If you apologize one more time, Swan, I will seriously get pissed. I know you are sorry. I get it. Now, stop," I said. Her eyes widened and she nodded. "Excellent." I released her lips from my fingers and placed a chaste kiss on her mouth.

I was feeling gross from laying in bed all day and I decided to hop in the shower. I quickly hosed off and looked at my reflection in the mirror. I hadn't really seen the damage that was inflicted on my face from Bella 'Evander Holyfield' Swan. I was a mess. Both of my eyes were covered in dark circles and the left one had a burst blood vessel. My nose was easily twice its size and slightly crooked. I pressed gently at the bruises on my face and cheeks. I hissed and shook it off.

I wrapped a towel around my waist and walked out into the bedroom. Bella was curled up, holding my pillow. She was snoring softly and her mouth was slightly opened. I eased on a pair of boxers and slid in behind her, spooning with her. She moaned slightly and nestled closer to me. I fell asleep quickly, despite all of my rest from the day.

xx LC xx

The rest of the week went by quickly. Alice was shocked at my bruised and battered face. Jasper gave Bella props for being able to knock some sense into my melon. Rosalie gave her a fist bump and Emmett pretty said that Bella did what he wanted to do since I started seeing his sister. My brows shot up at Emmett's comment and he smiled sweetly. I growled and starting walking

## La Cantante

toward Emmett. His smile faltered and took off like a bullet. I caught up with him easily as I was insanely fast and pounced onto his back. We wrestled on the ground for a bit before Bella and Rose came up and separated us. They mumbled something about acting our age and not our shoe size.

*Whatevah!*

For our show at Eclipse, Alice was desperately trying to get me to wear some kind of makeup to hide my garish bruises. I gave her a look. She quickly dropped it after smacking my head. I do not wear makeup.

Okay, I wore makeup once. I was in one musical in high school. *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. I was 'Joseph.' They put me in makeup and I hated it. It made my skin feel all icky and it gave me the creeps. The musical director was shocked I never auditioned again. Getting the lead as a sophomore was a big deal. Little did they know that the stage makeup scarred me for life.

Alice and Rose deemed themselves our tour managers and took it upon themselves to sell the t-shirts and hoodies that we ordered with our logo on them. They set up a small booth in Eclipse on Friday afternoon with all of our merchandise. We would use the profits to purchase new things. The order was already placed and was being created.

We got to Eclipse and our equipment was already set up. Kellan told me that the busboys had put our equipment on the stage. All we needed to do was plug in the sound equipment. I made quick work of that and we went into the green room until our set was supposed to begin.

"Can you believe we're meeting with actual record executives tomorrow?" Jasper asked. "I mean, this could happen!"

"I know," Emmett mused. "What if it does?"

"I don't mean to be a downer, but nothing is set in stone. We could cut the demo and then the record company could decide to absolutely hate us," I said,

## La Cantante

looking at Emmett and Jasper. "I'm thinking of it as experience until it proves to be otherwise."

"Jeez, Edward. You really are a downer. Realist much?" Emmett teased.

"I agree with Edward. I don't want to get my hopes up only to have the dashed when we're not signed," Bella said rationally. "I am grateful for the opportunity but I won't expect anything from this meeting and these recording sessions."

Jasper and Emmett looked at Bella and me like we were fucking crazy. I shrugged and went to get some water. Bella sat down on the couch and did her mental preparations for our show tonight. We were doing some new material and she was nervous as she was the main vocalist in our new stuff. Emmett sat down next to his sister with a huff and put his head on her shoulder. She pushed him away and gave him a pointed glare. I chuckled at his interactions with Bella.

After a half hour, Kellan came in and told us that whenever we were ready, we could go out to wow the crowd. Kellan left and we said a quick prayer. We then headed out to the stage in Eclipse. The lights were out and we were moving quickly and blindly to our instruments. As we settled to our places, a light shone behind us with a laser cut-out of our band logo. I gave Kellan a furtive glance and he smiled widely. Emmett smiled and began our count off for our opening number, "If You Only Knew." The crowd roared at our choice and we fed off of their energy. The lights were insane on the stage. They pulsed and moved in sync with our music and the beat of the song. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Alice and Rose look very pleased and excited. The first song ended and the crowd went wild.

Our next few songs were well received also. Bella was stressing about "F\*\*in Perfect." She was afraid that her voice was too 'sweet' for the song. When she sang it tonight, she had the right combination of huskiness and sultriness. The song that really caused Bella to have anxiety was "All Around Me." She struggled with the key that we were playing in. Her perfect pitch was driving her nuts as we played it higher than what Flyleaf recorded it. Emmett began the count off of the song and Bella stepped up to the microphone. She gave me a

## La Cantante

sensual smile and started singing. She looked back out to the audience but I knew she was singing for me. Only me.

*My hands are searching for you  
My arms are outstretched towards you  
I feel you on my fingertips  
My tongue dances behind my lips for you*

*This fire rising through my being  
Burning I'm not used to seeing you*

*I'm alive, I'm alive*

*I can feel you all around me  
Thickening the air I'm breathing  
Holding on to what I'm feeling  
Savoring this heart that's healing*

*My hands float up above me  
And you whisper you love me  
And I begin to fade  
Into our secret place*

*The music makes me sway  
The angels singing say we are alone with you  
I am alone and they are too with you*

*I'm alive, I'm alive*

*I can feel you all around me  
Thickening the air I'm breathing  
Holding on to what I'm feeling  
Savoring this heart that's healing*

*And so I cry  
The light is white*

## La Cantante

*And I see you*

*I'm alive, I'm alive, I'm alive*

*I can feel you all around me  
Thickening the air I'm breathing  
Holding on to what I'm feeling  
Savoring this heart that's healing*

*Take my hand  
I give it to you  
Now you own me  
All I am  
You said you would never leave me  
I believe you  
I believe*

*I can feel you all around me  
Thickening the air I'm breathing  
Holding on to what I'm feeling  
Savoring this heart that's healed*

Bella stepped back and gave a slight nod when she was done with her song. Her worries were unwarranted and I was flabbergasted by her rendition. She turned and gave me a wink as she walked back to the keyboard. She gazed out into the audience. Her eyes looked at where Kellan was standing. "Edward! Miller is here!" she hissed.

"Well, let's rock it for him," I hissed back. "All Summer Long, kids."

"Sweet!" Emmett said from his drum set. He gave us our beat and Bella wailed on the keyboard. We performed our hearts out and I could see Miller and Kellan conversing in the corner. Miller had a huge smile on his face and he looked thrilled with what we were doing.

## La Cantante

The rest of our set was a lot of fun. We totally hammed it up for Miller and he was eating all the 'pork.' We ended our set with "Last Resort." It's a song that we don't usually do. I personally don't like singing the f-bomb in front of a crowd, but we wanted to try something different. Bella giggled when we decided to do this song because with my bruised face and naughty lyrics, I looked like a 'bad boy.' Whatever. I wasn't. Bella knew that as did all of my friends and family. Though the audience had other ideas.

*Some of the topics of conversation on my fan page on Facebook are quite racy. Those things that they describe are for my Bella only. I'm not going to tongue fuck anybody but my fiancée. Christ, people!*

We finished our set and the crowd roared for an encore. Kellan gave us a thumbs down as there was a DJ tonight and we exited the stage. We got back to the green room and Emmett began bouncing off the walls.

"Holy shit! We fucking rocked! Isabelly, you totally nailed 'All Around Me!' I'm so proud of you!" he bellowed as he picked up Bella and spun her around. "Edward, you totally rocked on 'Last Resort.' The face works with the grittiness of the song."

"Shut up, you douche," I said, smacking his shoulder. "Blame your sister."

"Nah! I'm proud of her. She made your pretty face look more masculine," Emmett teased.

A quiet knock broke our banter. I scowled at Emmett and he mirrored my actions.

"Now, boys," Bella admonished as she walked to the door. She gave us both a pointed glare, sticking her tongue out at Emmett. She opened the door and Kellan and Miller breezed into the room.

"You guys are even better live than you were on those recordings," Miller said as he held out a hand to me. I shook it and he made the rounds of our group. "And the merchandise that was being sold here at the club was fantastic. Who's



your graphic artist?"

"My sister," I answered. "She designed the logo and Jasper worked with her to put it on the t-shirts."

"It's fabulous!" Miller said. "I know tomorrow was going to be strictly meetings. However, I want to have you actually record tomorrow. I have several musicians who have written some really good stuff. How early can you get to New York City?"

"Probably eleven or so," I said, looking at my band mates and fiancée. They all nodded.

"Okay. We'll start rehearsals from eleven to one. Then we'll break for lunch. At two or so, we'll record what we've rehearsed. I'm so excited!" Miller said, clapping me on the shoulder. "Kellan, thank you for the tip about these guys!"

"My pleasure," he said with a grin. "They are a pleasure to work with and they are consummate professionals, despite their young age."

"Good to know. Anyhow, I'm going to go. I have a four hour drive ahead of me," Miller winked. "See you all tomorrow!" Miller shook everyone's hands and scampered out of the green room. Kellan followed him, giving us a wink.

"Holy crow!" Jasper said, collapsing on the couch. "Can this be real?"

"Apparently it is," Emmett smiled. "We're recording! Miller is pleased!"

"I understand your excitement, Em. However, don't get too...you know?" I said, arching a brow.

"Edward, come on. Stop being such a pessimist for once and enjoy this," Emmett said.

"Not a pessimist. A realist," I sighed. "However, it is really cool."

## La Cantante

In all of the excitement, I didn't notice that Bella had moved to the couch and was curled up. I walked toward her and sat down next to my love. "What's up Bella?"

"Nothing. Just thinking," she said quietly, leaning against my shoulder.

"About what, love?" I asked.

"About this," she said gesturing to all of us. "Is it the right decision? Should we go and record with Twilight? We're still in school. I am excited about the prospect of getting a record contract, but I still want an education. I want to get my bachelor's degree." Bella's eyes searched mine and I could see her reasoning.

*Should we do this? Should we go through with this demo?*

**A/N: Breaking Midnight's set list for Eclipse.**

**If You Only Knew, Shinedown**

**F\*\*in Perfect, Pink**

**Use Somebody, Kings of Leon**

**Rolling in the Deep, ADELE**

**Hanging by a Moment, Lifehouse**

**All Around Me, Flyleaf**

**All Summer Long, Kid Rock**

**E.T., Katy Perry**

**Bless this Broken Road, Rascal Flatts**

**Breathe (2AM), Anna Nalick**

**You Gave Love a Bad Name, Bon Jovi**

**Heavy in Your Arms, Florence + the Machine**

**Heartbreak Warfare, John Mayer**

**Fade into You, Mazzy Star**

**Last Resort, Papa Roach**

**Also, I apologize for laying off the updates in this story. RL has not been kind to me lately. Last week, I decided to end my marriage with my husband. We were married for five years and I really wanted him to be my 'Edward.' But he wasn't. I was tired of the cold and distance that we had. This was a long time coming and I'm okay with it. Almost at peace with my decision. However, my view on love is a bit 'bitter.' I'll try my best to keep the updates coming. Please be patient with me in my crisis (aka divorce). Perhaps I will find my 'Edward.'**

# Recording Session

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 88: 'Wild' Recording Session

### BPOV

"Holy crow!" Jasper said, collapsing on the couch. "Can this be real?"

"Apparently it is," Emmett smiled. "We're recording! Miller is pleased!"

"I understand your excitement, Em. However, don't get too...you know?" Edward said, arching a brow.

"Edward, come on. Stop being such a pessimist for once and enjoy this," Emmett said.

"Not a pessimist. A realist," Edward sighed. "However, it is really cool."

In all of the excitement, I walked to the couch in the green room. I curled up, contemplating what was happening. Edward noticed me sitting on the couch and he plopped down next to me. "What's up Bella?"

"Nothing. Just thinking," I said quietly, leaning against Edward's shoulder.

"About what, love?" he asked.

"About this," I said gesturing to all of us. "Is it the right decision? Should we go and record with Twilight? We're still in school. I am excited about the prospect of getting a record contract, but I still want an education. I want to get

my bachelor's degree."

Edward searched my eyes and he pulled me onto his lap. "You make some very rational arguments, Bella. I'm just as apprehensive about the whole situation, but there is no harm in going to meet with Miller and his musicians tomorrow."

"Come on, Isabelly! Don't be such a killjoy," Emmett whined.

I held Edward's gaze and he gave me his crooked smirk. I rolled my eyes, returning his smile. He kissed me sweetly and held me close. I squeezed his hand and hopped off his lap. "Let's do this."

The boys let out a whoop and we all clambered together for a group hug. A smelly group hug. Emmett was rank from being on stage. We pulled apart and I pinched my nose. "Emmett, it's called deodorant."

"I don't smell," he said, sniffing his pits.

"Um, actually you do," Edward said, wrinkling his nose. "I have a broken schnoz and I can smell you."

"Fuck you, Cullen," he said, smacking Edward upside the head. Edward caught Emmett's hand and twisted it behind my brother. He pulled Emmett's arm up and he grimaced, falling to his knees. "Okay, I give! Uncle!"

"Ass," Edward said. "Come on, we've got to load up the merchandise and head back. We've got a long ride tomorrow and have to be up early. On a Saturday. Damn it."

"What about our equipment?" Jasper asked. "I don't want to assume anything."

Edward whipped out his phone and texted Miller, asking about equipment needs. He called back immediately saying that all we needed to bring was the guitars and amps. The recording studio would provide drums and keyboards. Edward and Jasper grabbed their guitars and loaded up the amps into Edward's car. We checked on the merchandise and it was all sold out. We then grabbed

## La Cantante

Rose and Alice and drove back to Emerson, dropping of Emmett and Rose at Patterson and Alice and Jasper at Rathburn. Edward parked the car in the garage and we went upstairs. Once we got into our apartment, we showered together. Edward wanted it to progress to more, but I was too tired and I still felt overwhelmingly guilty about his poor nose. He pouted like a petulant child but I promised that we would have some naked fun time after our return from New York City.

xx LC xx

The alarm went off way too early. Edward, who was normally pretty coherent in the mornings, was bitching as his phone starting chirping on the nightstand. I chuckled and got up, smacking his ass. He growled and tossed a pillow at my retreating form. I giggled as I got ready for our journey. I lightly curled my hair and did my makeup in a soft, sultry way. I popped in my contact lenses and went out to get dressed. I decided on wearing a pair of black leggings with a gray tunic that was loose and hung off my shoulder and a pair of gray boots that reached the knee. As I was dressing, Edward did his morning routine and I could hear him curse his hair.

"Bella!" he whined.

"What?" I mimicked back.

"Help! I'm a hot mess," he grumbled. I walked into the bathroom and found him sitting on the toilet, running his hands through his hair. "This is seriously fucked up. I look like a fucking lunatic."

Edward gave me an adorable grimace and I couldn't help but laugh at him. His scowl deepened and I sobered quickly. I picked up my water bottle that I use when I do my hair curly and I dampened the cat that died on Edward's head. Using my fingers, I restyled it with my blow dryer, adding some pomade to his soft, auburn locks. I gently cupped his chin, forcing his evergreen eyes to meet mine. I kissed both of his cheeks and then his lips sweetly. Edward was not having any of that. When my lips met his, he deepened the kiss, plunging his tongue into my mouth. His hands moved to my ass and he gripped me tightly. I

## La Cantante

laid my hands on his shoulders, pushing away. "Someone's horny," I giggled against his neck.

"Undeniably," Edward cooed. "You're so fucking hot, baby. I love this." He ran his fingers across my exposed collarbone and down the valley between my breasts. I whimpered and extricated myself from his seduction.

"Behave, Edward. We're going to be in the car for eight hours today with Emmett and Jasper. That should get rid of..." I trailed off as I gently cupped his prominent boner.

"Pack a bag, Bella," Edward said quirking a brow.

"Wha...what?" I squeaked.

"I will kill those two buffoons if I have to spend eight hours in the car with them. Pack a bag," Edward explained.

"Okay, Mr. Bossy Pants," I said, walking out of the bathroom. I pulled out a duffel bag and threw in some clothes for both of us and other necessities. After Edward finished in the bathroom, I grabbed our toiletries and tossed them into the duffel. I heard Edward's voice quietly talking to both Emmett and Jasper on a conference call. He was explaining his plan. I followed his voice to the guest bedroom and saw him on website, booking our hotel. He was typing in his credit card number for two rooms when he noticed me and gave me a wink. I kissed his forehead and dragged the duffel into the foyer. Edward jogged to the bedroom and he got dressed. He put on a pair of distressed jeans, black Doc Martens, black graphic t-shirt and a leather jacket.

*Yummy. He's so fucking hot.*

"I heard that, Bella," Edward laughed. "Work on your filter, love."

"You look amazing, Edward," I giggled. "I want to jump your bones."

## La Cantante

"The feelings mutual, baby. However, when do we NOT want to jump each other's bones?" he snorted.

"This is true," I said, winking at him. "Are we ready?"

"Yep. We're getting breakfast on the way out. Emmett is begging to go to this little diner," Edward said, rolling his eyes. He bent down and picked up the duffel bag, slinging it across his body. I grabbed my purse and the keys. Edward opened the door and I locked it as we left. Edward deposited the duffel in the back of his car and we loaded up into the SUV. Edward backed out the car and drove us to Patterson. Jasper and Emmett were waiting outside, holding their own duffels. They were tossed into the back and we headed out on the highway. About an hour away, we stopped at the diner. We ate a quiet breakfast. Jasper was barely coherent. Edward raised a brow asking him about what was wrong. Jasper mumbled something about 'pixie' and 'sex fiend.' Edward paled and growled lightly. Jasper cowered and explained that Alice was insatiable and she kept him up all night. I laid my hand on Edward's arm, calming him.

After our tense breakfast, we got back on the highway and finished driving to New York City. When we got closer to the city, Edward asked me to turn on the GPS. I plugged in the address and the disembodied voice of the GPS lady piped through the car, guiding us to the Twilight Recording Studios. We pulled up to a sleek office building and Miller came out. He handed Edward a permit, explaining that he should park in the parking garage on the fifth level. Edward hung the permit on the rearview mirror and followed Miller's directions to the parking garage. We pulled into the fifth level and parked the car. A large man, about Emmett's size, approached the car with a large dolly for our equipment. He introduced himself as Timothy and he was one of the musicians that was going to be working with us today.

Timothy rode with us up to the 42nd floor of the office building. Miller was there with a wide smile on his face and a twinkle in his eyes. He led us to rehearsal space with three other musicians.



## La Cantante

"Okay, everyone. This is Breaking Midnight. We have Edward Cullen who is the guitarist and lead male vocalist; Bella Swan who is the keyboardist, guitarist and lead female vocalist; Jasper Whitlock who is the bassist and back-up vocalist; and finally, Emmett Swan who is the drummer," Miller smiled.

The musicians in the room waved and said hello. Miller then introduced them. Timothy, who helped us with our equipment, was a guitarist and lyricist. There was also Meghan who was one of the composers and keyboardist. Ryan who played string instruments and was also a lyricist. Finally, Nessie, who played guitar and percussion. After our introductions, Miller left us to 'create.' He winked and danced out of the rehearsal room.

"Okay, before we start working on songs, we want to hear what you guys sound like," Ryan suggested. "Why don't you set up your equipment and play three songs that portray you guys as a band."

"Sounds good," Edward smiled. He and Jasper took out the guitars and set up the amplifiers. Emmett sat down behind the massive drum set and fussed with the instruments, getting a feel for them. I stepped behind keyboard and ran my fingers over the keys. We discussed briefly what we wanted to play and we decided on "Decode," "If You Only Knew," and "Broken." We began our mini set in front of the house musicians with "If You Only Knew." Edward's voice carried through the rehearsal room and I could see the smiles on the group. We finished our first song and switched gears to "Broken." Edward smirked at me as I stood next to him. I remembered the moment when we first sang this song. The moment that I fell in love with him. His knowing smile told me the same thing as he started picking through the introduction. Just like the first time, Edward started the song. His voice took on a more husky tone and he looked incredibly sexy as he sung the first part of the song. When my part came in, I morphed my voice into something sultry and sensuous. Ryan and Timothy's eyes widened and they whispered in Meghan's ear. We finished "Broken" and ended with "Decode." Since I didn't have my guitar, I played the second guitar part on the keyboard, winging it as I went along.

## La Cantante

We finished our set and looked at the group of musicians expectantly. Meghan stood up and she had a hard glare on her face. I cringed inwardly, afraid that they hated it. She paced in front of us, tapping her lip as she walked. Edward and I shared a wary look. He bit his lip as his brows shot over his glasses. Our eyes went back to Meghan and she had stopped her pacing. She looked at Edward and then to me, her hazel eyes and face unreadable. She stared at us for an immeasurable moment before her face broke into a huge grin, lighting up her features. "That was bloody awesome," she said in an English accent. "Best sound I've heard in years! Edward, your voice is the right combination of rough and smooth. I know it makes absolutely no sense, but trust me. Your playing technique with the guitar is impeccable as well. Bella, your voice is like a chameleon. You can morph your voice into anything you want it to be. The blend between you and Edward is perfection. I do have a question for you, Bella. Do you play any other instruments?"

"Um, yeah. I play the guitar. For 'Decode,' I usually play the guitar, but I didn't have mine with me," I said sheepishly.

"Timmy, give Bella your guitar. I want to hear 'Decode' again with you on the guitar," she said excitedly. "Have you ever played it on the keyboard prior to today?"

"No, I winged it," I blushed.

"Bloody fantastic," she muttered. Timmy handed over a blue electric guitar and I slipped it over my shoulders, plugging it into the amp that he indicated. I quickly tuned it and we performed "Decode" a second time, with me on the appropriate instrument. As we performed it, Meghan began dancing and tugging on Nessie's arm. Nessie swatted her away, but maintained a smile as we sang. We finished the performance and Meghan exclaimed that we were the next Paramore, but better.

Meghan grabbed my hand and we sat down at the large grand piano in the rehearsal space. She started plunking out chords and yelling them out to the boys. Edward picked up an acoustic guitar and started playing the chords in the order that Meghan demanded. I started noodling over the chords and Meghan's

## La Cantante

eyes widened. She indicated to her chin with some staff paper on the piano. I jotted down some ideas that I had sung onto the staff paper. We jammed for about an hour, gathering ideas. Timmy and Ryan were scribbling furiously in their corner and Nessie worked with Emmett on adding some different rhythms to our ideas.

Meghan looked at my musings on the staff paper and she played through them. "These are really good, Bella. Excellent," she beamed.

"Edward's better," I smiled. "He's the composer out of all us. Any original music that we sing was written by him."

"Well, Edward," Meghan said as she got up from the piano. "I want to hear what you have in your brain."

Edward blushed and handed me his acoustic guitar. I sat down on the amp. Edward began slower piece and I joined in with the guitar. We slowly layered our sound and Edward's voice carried through the speakers as he sung some nonsense syllables over the chords and rhythms he played. Meghan was writing all of it down onto the staff paper with a triumphant grin on her face. As Edward played, a part of my lullaby was weaved into the intricate chords he played on the piano. He looked at me, giving me a seductive wink. I blushed and echoed the melody in my guitar playing. We finished our slower jam session.

"Edward, that is one of the most beautiful pieces I've ever heard," Meghan enthused. "So delicate, but with an edge. I think we should record both things that we dabbled with today. Timmy and Ryan, how are the lyrics coming?"

"Almost done, Megs," Timmy smiled.

"Fantastic," she replied. "Let's get some food and then we'll work on adding lyrics to the songs and recording them."

Meghan and Nessie led us to the elevators and we headed out into New York City. We walked to a small Chinese restaurant and settled into a large booth.

## La Cantante

"Are Timmy and Ryan coming?" Jasper asked.

"If they finish the lyrics, they'll join us. I'll send Timmy a text to see if he wants anything," Nessie replied. She took out her cell phone and tapped out a brief message. A few moments later, Timmy replied. "Looks like we're picking up food for the Lyrics Twins."

"Cool, love," Meghan smiled as she kissed Nessie on the lips. Emmett squeaked. "What's wrong? Never seen two chicks kiss?"

"Emmett, you are an ass," Jasper said as he smacked him on the head. "It's not polite to stare or squeak."

"He has seen two women kiss. It was me and Edward's sister. He got all hot and bothered," I said, giving Emmett a stern glare. "I was just bothered at his reaction. Fucking perv."

"What?" Emmett said as he chugged his water.

"You really are an ass, Em," Edward said, furrowing his brow. "I apologize in advance for any crude or obnoxious comments my future brother-in-law makes. I'm not related to him by blood."

"Me neither," I chuckled. "He was raised by bears."

The waitress appeared and took our orders. I was still ready to pummel Emmett and I glared at him disapprovingly. He was completely oblivious to my stern look. Meghan and Nessie giggled at my facial expressions. Nessie put her arm around my shoulders, putting me at ease.

"It's no big deal," Nessie said as she took Meghan's hand. "We're both comfortable in our sexuality. However, if it makes you uncomfortable that we're affectionate, we'll back off." Nessie was quite pretty. She had a short haircut. It was dyed a maroon color that really accented her deep green eyes and toffee colored skin.

## La Cantante

"If you are happy, then we're happy," Edward smiled genuinely. "Just ignore this one," he said as he jerked a thumb to Emmett. "We do."

"You suck, Eddie," Emmett said.

"Moving on," Jasper sighed exasperatedly. "How long have you worked for Twilight?"

"About five years," Meghan answered. "I started in the offices and then I was playing in one of the rehearsal rooms and Miller heard what I was playing. He spoke to the CEO and the rest is history."

"I started three years ago. I was hired as a rehearsal musician, but then was offered to be a composer when one of my singles hit the Billboard Top 100," Nessie smiled. "So, how do you think this morning's session went?"

Our lunch had been delivered and we all dug into the food. Edward swallowed his mouthful of General Tso's Chicken. I groaned inwardly at his meal choice.

*Oh my nostrils.*

"It was amazing," Edward smiled. "Unbelievable, really."

"How so?" Meghan asked.

"Just to jam and have the music flow through us as a group was so cool," Edward said. "Sorry, I really can't articulate how I'm feeling. It's overwhelming."

"Well, it was easy to work with you. The level of your musical expertise is amazing," Nessie said earnestly. "Are you self taught?"

"No. Edward and I are both music education majors at Emerson University. I've been singing for as long as I can remember. I've played the piano and guitar for roughly ten years or so," I answered.

## La Cantante

"I've played the piano forever. I only found my singing voice after I went through puberty," Edward shrugged. "I went through a rough time about a decade ago when I lost my mom to ovarian cancer. I couldn't do much with music for awhile after that. But, when I did, it helped me heal. Bella helped me the most."

"I can see the connection between the two of you. It's quite special," Meghan grinned.

"Soul mates," Nessie said.

"Yeah, definitely. Soul mates," Meghan agreed. "How about you, Jasper?"

"I picked up the bass on my own. However, like Bella and Edward, I've been around music for most of my life. I'm not a music major, but I am a part of the top vocal group at Emerson," Jasper replied.

"Emmett?"

"Behave, Emmy," I said sternly.

"Jeez, have a little faith, Isabelly," he said, rolling his eyes. "I can't sing. You don't want to hear me sing. However, I picked up the drums when Bella started the piano. I felt left out of the whole musical experience and my dad got me a drum set. Biggest mistake ever. I think he has constant migraines because of me."

We finished our lunch and Meghan paid the bill. Edward tried to pick it up but Meghan said that it was on Twilight's dime. He blushed and put his credit card back in his wallet. We grabbed the food for Timmy and Ryan and walked back to the Twilight Studios.

Before we went into the rehearsal space, I went into the bathroom. I took a few deep breaths after I finished my business and as I washed my hands. I walked down the hallway to the rehearsal studio. Timmy and Ryan were working with Edward on the lyrics for one of the pieces we had plunked out earlier. Timmy

## La Cantante

was eating his Chinese food as Edward worked at the piano. Ryan was stuffing his face as he was writing on his pad of paper.

We figured out the ballad first. It had a rough edge, but was very sweet in the lyrics. As we worked the song, Edward made a few suggestions for the lyrics. Timmy actually liked them better and we made the appropriate changes. We performed the ballad three times before we decided to record it. It was going to be a rough recording, but a recording nonetheless. We recorded the ballad twice. When it was done, Meghan listened to the rough recording, pleased with the results. We then worked on the faster piece. The lyrics that Ryan wrote were interesting. The story was similar to mine with Jacob. A boy loses his love and becomes with the girl. The girl finds a new love and it is nearly torn apart by the old boyfriend. In the end, love prevails. We did a rough recording of the second song and nailed it in one take. We had just finished when Miller came in and grinned at us.

"How did it go?" he asked.

"Bloody fantastic," Meghan said with an impish grin. "We recorded two songs. However, they are rough."

"We can tell a lot from the rough recordings," Miller replied. "If we like what we hear, when can you come in to make a more proper recording?"

"We'll have to check our schedules," Edward answered. "We're getting close to the end of the semester. Next weekend is Easter and we're going to be out of town. Perhaps the weekend after that?"

"We'll make it work for you," Miller said, extending his hand. Edward shook it and gave him a tight smile. It didn't reach his eyes. I poked his side and he shook his head imperceptibly. Miller shook the rest of our hands and he escorted us to the elevators. Timmy followed us with the dolly of our equipment. We rode down and loaded up the Volvo. Timmy shook our hands, giving me a hug. He told us that he was thoroughly impressed our hard work and that we were most talented group he'd work with in his seven years at Twilight. We muttered our thanks and he gave us a wave before he went back

## La Cantante

to the elevators. Edward backed the car out and we drove out of the parking garage. We went to hand the security guard the placard for parking, but he told us to keep it. Miller said that he was expecting us back. Edward shrugged and handed it to me. I put it in the glove compartment.

We drove to the hotel that Edward had booked and valet parked the car. We walked up to the front desk. I was exhausted and I know the guys were too. Edward checked us in and we headed up to our respective rooms. Jasper was not happy about sharing a room with Emmett, but Edward told him that beggars can't be choosers. He is staying at the hotel for free. Buck up and deal with it, Whitlock. Emmett asked if we wanted to go to a club. I was honestly bushed and desperately needed a nap. Edward told him that we'd think about it. Once we got settled into our room, Edward pulled me onto the bed, holding me close to his chest and mumbled something about sleep. I chuckled and nestled into his body. Very quickly, we both were dead to the world.

xx LC xx

"Edward! Wake up you lazy ass! We want to go out!"

"Bella, if I kill your brother, will you hate me?" Edward grumbled against my hair.

"No, I'll help bury the body," I replied, my voice thick with sleep.

"Do I need to break out the hose?" Emmett boomed.

"Fuck me," Edward snarled. He released his tight hold around my torso and he crawled out of bed. "I could have slept for so much longer." He rolled his eyes and padded to the door. He whipped it open and found Emmett and Jasper standing at the door. "Fuck off, assholes. I'm tired. I'm bitchy. I'm not in the mood."

"Someone's PMSing," Jasper snorted.



## La Cantante

Edward went to close the door, but Emmett slipped inside, pulling Jasper along with him. Emmett walked over to the bed and he pounced on top of me.

"Emmett McCarty Swan! Get your fat ass off my bed," I shrieked.

"Not until you and Mr. Grumpy agree to go out to this club with us. We were talking to Ryan, the lyricist guy, and he said that this club, Wild, was off the chain," Emmett said as he bounced on top of the bed. "Come on! Live a little!"

"Emmett, minor technicality. I'm underage. So is Edward," I said, trying to push Emmett off my bladder. Unsuccessfully, mind you.

"Ryan told us that he would put our names on the VIP list and we'll get in, no big deal," Jasper smiled. "Please?"

"Pretty please?" Emmett begged.

"I don't have 'club' attire," I said to Emmett.

"Fear not, young Bella," Jasper crooned. He held up his bag and plopped it on a chair. "The pixie knows all. The pixie sees all. She gave me an outfit for you."

"Edward, can you believe this?" I squeaked as I gazed at him.

"No," he sighed, rubbing his hands through his hair. "What do you want to do, Bella? Go to this club or stay here?"

"Go to the club," Emmett said in a high voice. "See! She wants to go," he said, back in his normal, deep baritone.

Edward threw a pillow at Emmett. "You are such a douche, Swan. I mean really."

"Hey!" both Emmett and I snarled.

"Sorry, Emmett Swan," Edward corrected. "Bella?"

## La Cantante

"It's no harm in going. If we don't like it, we can leave," I rationalized. Jasper did a fist pump and tossed me a pair of heels and slinky purple dress. I arched a brow and he just shrugged. I pinched Emmett's left nipple and tweaked his right ear and he scrambled off my lap. *My bladder thanks you.* I went into the bathroom and changed into the dress. I called out to Edward to hand me my toiletry bag from the duffel. He did and I deepened my makeup. I heard the boys shuffle in the hotel room as I finished poofing. I looked at the dress that Alice gave to Jasper for me to wear and it was quite sexy. It was a one shouldered dress that clung to every curve. It was very hot and I actually liked it. I slipped on the heels and walked out into the room. Edward took one look at me and his eyes darkened. Then his brow furrowed. I gave him a pointed look, placing my hands on hips. He pinched his nose and took a few deep breaths.

"Isabelly," Emmett growled.

"What, brother bear?" I asked sweetly."

"That dress leaves little to the imagination," Emmett said quietly.

"Oh relax. I have three hot dates. Who is going to approach me?" I laughed.

"Come on. Let's get 'Wild!'"

Edward laced his fingers with mine, gently tracing my exposed collarbone. "You look absolutely stunning tonight, Bella. Despite the fact you have three hot dates, you will have men falling all over themselves to get to you." He tugged on my hand and led us out to the elevators. He popped in a piece of gum and we headed to the lobby. Ryan was waiting in the lobby along with Timmy, Nessie and Meghan. They had brought a limo from Twilight and we rode to Wild in style. The limo dropped us off at the door and we walked up to the bouncer. He winked at Nessie and he ushered us inside. The club was huge. It was easily three times the size of Eclipse and that was just the main floor. There two other floors above the main floor. We went to the second level which was where the VIP lounge was located. It was a bit more intimate, but still exciting.

## La Cantante

We sat down on the couches and a perky cocktail waitress approached us. Meghan asked for a bottle of Cristal. I blanched at her request. It was the most expensive champagne. The waitress returned with the bottle and enough glasses for all of us. We were poured a glass and we toasted Breaking Midnight. I sipped my drink and it was extremely smooth. After two more glasses, Edward tugged on my hand and we went out on the dance floor. He held me very close, wedging his muscular thigh between mine. His hands moved to my ass and I looked into his jade eyes. I wrapped my hands around his biceps and we moved together to the strong beat of the music. I didn't recognize what was playing. The only thing that held my attention was Edward and his gaze into my eyes. One of his hands moved up to my cheek and he gently caressed my skin. He leaned down and his soft lips brushed mine. I moaned quietly and my mouth opened. His tongue slid between my lips and he pulled me closer to his body. "You are so fucking sexy, Bella," he murmured against my lips.

"I could say the same about you, Edward," I replied. My fingers danced along his muscled forearms and up to his broad shoulders. He had put on a button down shirt over his t-shirt and it hugged his muscles. I could feel myself get damp as I thought about his body and what he was capable of doing with it. His hands kneaded on my ass and I could feel his excitement push against my belly. "Got wood?" I teased.

"Hmmm," Edward replied, arching a brow. "Only for you, beautiful. Only for you." His lips crashed down against mine and we grasped at each other hungrily. My fingers weaved into his bronze locks and I tried to pull him closer to me.

"Break it up. Break it up," Jasper chastised. He forced Edward and I apart, giving us a mocking glare. "No fucking on the dance floor."

"Jasper," Edward growled. "What the fuck?"

"Edward, don't get mad at him," I reasoned. "We were imitating a porno."

## La Cantante

Edward gaped at me, his jaw scraping the ground. Jasper looked at me and nodded. "I agree with your fiancée. She's a smart one."

"We were not imitating a porno," Edward defended. "Were we?"

"If you were any closer, you'd be one person," Jasper laughed. "Emmett was ready to castrate you with a rusty spoon."

Edward grumbled and I rolled my eyes. However, we danced at a respectable distance for the rest of the night. It was a good time. Meghan and Nessie came onto the dance floor, dancing with us, while Timmy and Ryan stayed at the table. We drank more Cristal and I could feel a slight buzz going on. I gave Edward a sloppy kiss and stumbled to the bathroom. I took care of my barking bladder and walked back to the table where Timmy and Ryan were sitting. I plopped down and chugged another flute of champagne. Ryan laughed while Timmy insisted I slow down.

*This shit is good. Yum! Fizzy goodness! Makes me feel happy!*

Good lord, Bella. You're totally shitfaced.

*Yep.*

I got up from the table and found Edward dancing with Meghan and Nessie. Jasper was trying to dance, but was failing miserably. Emmett was off in a corner, attached to his phone. I wrapped my arms around Edward's waist and laid my cheek against his sweaty back. He turned in my arms and sudden movement caused my head to spin. I blinked a few times and looked up at my fiancé drunkenly.

*Gawd, he's pretty.*

"Shit, baby. You're lit," Edward laughed.

"Did I say that out loud?" I slurred.

## La Cantante

"Yes, you did. However, you are the pretty one," he chortled. "Come on, lush."

"I'm not a lush," I said, stumbling over my heels. "I've never been drunk in my life."

"Right," Edward said. "I think it's time to go."

"No," I wailed. "I want to dance. I want to dirty dance with you, Edward. The horizontal mambo."

"Yeah, we really need to go," Edward said in a flustered tone. "Come on, drunkard."

I pouted. Edward grabbed my hand and led me off the dance floor. Jasper and Emmett were talking to the house band and they said that we can take the limo back to the hotel. That they would take a cab. I was looking forward to getting some loving from my fuckhawl fiancé.

"Bella, your filter is absolutely gone," Edward laughed.

"What did I say, Edward?" I asked. He shook his head and we headed out to the front of the club. "Edward, I want your peen."

"God! Bella's a horny drunk," Jasper snickered.

"She's going to be so hung-over tomorrow," Edward sighed. I laughed and smacked Edward's muscular chest. His six pack drew in my attention and traced the lines and curves of his torso. He stopped my hand and loaded me into the limo. Jasper and Emmett followed behind and I could see their looks of amusement and disapproval. The limo drove us to our hotel. I was singing some song in the car that was being piped through the speakers. I refused to move until the song was done. I found myself being lifted out of the limo and slung over someone's shoulder. I smacked the ass of my captor. Once inside the lobby of the hotel, I was placed on my feet and the room started spinning.

*Pretty colors.*

## La Cantante

"Come on, Bella. Let's get you upstairs and in bed," Edward said, with a worried look on his face.

"Are you going to be naked?" I asked as he led me through the lobby.

"Sure, baby," he placated me.

"No you aren't," I frowned. I stopped and put my hands on my hips. "You better be naked."

"I will. I promise," he said as he pulled me into the elevator. We rode up to our floor in silence. We walked to our room and I plopped down on the bed. I looked at Edward, seductively. *I think*. I reached for the side of my dress to unzip it. When I moved, my stomach lurched. My hands went up to my mouth and I ran into the bathroom. I hurled up everything I had eaten today. Edward followed me and held back my hair as I worshipped the porcelain god.

*Fuck. My. Life.*

*I'm so drunk.*

**A/N: So they recorded. The house band was impressed and Bella is drunk off her ass. Poor thing. I was hoping to give you a lemon, but drunk Bella was too good to pass up. Leave me love!**

# Hangover and Future Discussions

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

*I'm shooting for 500 reviews...I'm almost there. Please leave me some love if you read the ramblings in my head. Getting the review alert in my in-box is like crack. SOOOOO ADDICTING!*

## Chapter 89: Hangover and Future Discussions

### EPOV

"Ugh!" Bella croaked.

"How's the hangover?" I teased.

"I'll let you know when the room stops spinning," she grumbled. "I feel like I licked the bottom of Emmett's shoe."

"Um, gross," I laughed. "Here, take this." I handed Bella a couple of pills and a bottle of water. Her hair was a tangled mess. Her face was splotchy and still covered with her makeup; mascara tinting her cheeks. She was in one of my t-shirts that I managed to get on her. Thankfully, in between puke sessions. She took the pills, tossing them down her throat and swallowed the entire bottle of water in one gulp. "Impressive, Swan."

"I need to get the taste of puke out of my throat," she said, scrunching her nose. "I'm never drinking again."

"You didn't even have that much," I said, smoothing her hair. "But it was champagne. That shit always makes me extremely hungover."

## La Cantante

She groaned and held her head in her hands. "I'm so sorry, Edward."

"Why are you apologizing? You didn't do anything wrong," I soothed.

"I wanted to be with you, you know? I mean..."

"Bella, we have the rest of our lives to be with each other. Besides, it's not like we don't have a place to get it on," I joked.

"I know, but I was really horny last night," she sighed. "And you looked fucking gorgeous."

"Um, thanks?" I said, raising my eyebrows. "You're the gorgeous one. Absolutely stunning."

"I bet I look fabulous right now," she said, running her fingers through her matted hair.

"Now, not so much," I chortled.

"Thanks, Edward," she said dryly. "I can feel the love."

"You know I love you immensely, Bella," I smiled. "Come on, it's almost noon and check out is at one." I scooped Bella out of the bed and carried her to the bathroom. I turned on the shower, placing her on the toilet seat. She squeaked at the coldness against her ass and she smacked my arm. "What's that for?"

"Putting me on the cold toilet," she said.

I rolled my eyes and took off my shirt and easing my sleep pants down my legs. I looked at Bella and she reluctantly removed her clothes, slipping in behind the shower curtain. I got in behind her and wrapped my arms around her waist. She leaned against my body, putting her hands over mine. "What do you think is going to happen with this Twilight Recording contract?" she asked as she turned in my arms. She leaned back and wet her hair.



## La Cantante

"I don't know," I answered honestly.

"You seemed a bit frustrated yesterday when Miller mentioned us coming back to record some more," she said observantly.

"I'm just hesitant to trust him. He seems like a nice guy, but we can't let our excitement get away from us," I said as I ran my fingers through her wet strands of hair. "He seems TOO eager to help. Like he wants to exploit us."

"Then, we don't move any further," she answered simply. I reached for the shampoo in the shower and squeezed some in my hands, rubbing it into Bella's hair. She moaned quietly as I massaged her scalp. "That feels good, Edward. It's calming the raging headache that I've got going on here." I continued to wash her hair, massaging and rubbing her head. I walked us back into the hot spray of the shower, rinsing the shampoo from her long brown hair. I gracefully switched spots with her, running my hands through my own hair, dampening it. I did a cursory wash of my own head and washed my body as Bella washed hers. We finished our shower and got out of the bathroom. Bella put her hair in a long plait down her back, not bothering to dry her hair. We got dressed and Bella sent a text to Emmett. Within a few minutes, a banging resounded in our room. Bella covered her ears and groaned.

I chuckled darkly as I walked to open the door. "Yes, Emmett?" I asked as I opened the door.

"You ready?" he asked.

"Just about. Her majesty is a bit hungover," I laughed. Bella snarled and flipped me off. Jasper and Emmett came into our room and I checked us out using the automated system. We headed down to the lobby and I got the car. Bella crawled into the backseat, laying her head on Emmett's lap. Jasper sat in the front seat with me. We drove for two hours before Emmett begged for food. We pulled off and got some McDonalds. Bella refused it as she turned a lovely shade of green. She said she was never eating again. I arched a brow. She further explained that her stomach was upset from last night and the alcohol.

## La Cantante

*My fiancée. The lush.*

After we left McDonald's, Jasper took over driving duties. I was tired. I hadn't slept well the night before due in part to Bella's puking and my own slight inebriation. I took over sitting in the back, cradling Bella's head and Emmett sat in the front seat. We finally got back to Emerson and dropped off Emmett. I got back in the front seat and dropped off Jasper. Bella was still conked out in the backseat, snoring lightly. I pulled the car into the parking garage and gently picked her up, carrying her to the elevators. We got upstairs and I managed to open our apartment door. I put Bella into our bed before heading downstairs to get the bag. I was finally upstairs for good when my phone chirped from my pocket. I pulled it out and saw that there was a new text from Miller.

*I listened to the recordings you made and I was absolutely blown away. We want to make more polished versions of the songs and market them to a test audience. Call me on Monday to arrange times for you and Breaking Midnight to come in. Great job! - Miller*

I read and reread the message. There was something about Miller that I just didn't trust. I couldn't put my finger on it, but it bothered me. Also, Bella's warning about finishing college resounded in my brain as well. I also wanted my degree. I didn't get into this prestigious school to blow it off. I wanted my bachelor's degree. I wanted to move on and get my masters. I wanted more than to be in a 'band.'

I sent off the text to Emmett and Jasper asking for their input. They both agreed that we need to discuss as a group and that would have to happen tomorrow. I told them to come over after their last classes and we'd discuss over dinner.

I made some dinner for Bella and I. I kept it simple, knowing Bella's stomach was unsettled. I defrosted some chicken noodle soup that my mom brought when Bella was sick with pneumonia. I put the soup and some bread and water on to a tray and carried it to the bedroom. Bella was still asleep, curled around my pillow. "Bella? Love? You need to eat," I whispered as I caressed her cheek.

## La Cantante

Her eyes fluttered open and she sat up, looking confused. "When did we get home?"

"About two hours ago," I smirked. "You've been sleeping for awhile."

"Huh," she muttered. "Sorry that you had to carry my fat ass up here."

"Bella, you are not fat," I snarled.

She shrugged and rolled her eyes. I placed the tray with dinner over her legs and she ate the soup greedily. I chuckled as I left her with her soup, fixing a bowl for myself and inhaling it over the sink. Bella walked into the kitchen, carrying the tray. She cleared her throat and gave me a death stare. "Where were you raised? In a barn? I mean, really, Edward?" she asked as she plopped me in one of the kitchen chairs. I blushed and finished my meal, sitting at the table. After dinner, I told Bella about the text from Miller and the subsequent meeting with Jasper and Emmett. She nodded and understood.

We spent the rest of the night working on homework and lounging. Bella's head was still bothering her and I was just spent from the busyness of the weekend. After trying to stay awake for the better part of an hour, we decided to go to bed and prepare for the shortened week this week.

xx LC xx

Classes were pretty boring. I mean, I was asleep with my eyes open, boring. The morning dragged on and on and on and on...

*For the love that is holy, people.*

Eventually, classes ended and Bella headed to an appointment with Dr. Lunes. I drove her to the appointment and went grocery shopping while she was with her. After an hour, I picked Bella up and we drove back to the apartment to make dinner for our powwow with the boys about Miller's proposal. Emmett sent me a text informing me that Rose and Alice were going to come with them to the meeting about Miller's proposal. I asked Bella if that was okay and she

## La Cantante

said that it was. Alice had mentioned it to her during sectionals in University Singers.

Bella and I worked together on making chicken enchiladas and Spanish rice. She put me to work cutting the vegetables and ingredients for the sauce. I hated chopping. With a passion. Bella dared me to walk away but I knew if I did, I'd get my ass kicked by a 5'4" brunette with perfect pitch. Bella was reserved but when she lost her temper, steer clear. Man alive!

Around five, the intercom buzzed and I stopped chopping to answer it. "Hello?"

"Let us in, bitch," Emmett laughed.

"Fuck off," I snarled as I hit the button to let them in. I left the door unlocked and finished my chopping, handing the vegetables to Bella. She kissed my cheek and took them for the enchiladas. Our group of friends bounded through the door and made a ruckus. Emmett and Jasper grabbed me from the kitchen and we watched Sports Center. Rose and Alice were talking to Bella about wedding stuff. An hour or so later, Bella called us into the kitchen to make our plates for dinner. We ate in the family room, stuffing our faces with the delicious enchiladas.

Dinner was cleared and dishes were washed and put away. Jasper looked at me and his eyebrows knitted together. "What do we do about this offer from Miller?"

"I'm not sure. There's something about him that I don't trust," I said, wrinkling my nose. "Alice, the omniscient one, what do you see?"

She smacked my arm and rolled her eyes. "I think that Miller has ulterior motives. However, his bosses will be impressed with you as a group. I have a feeling."

"Should we bypass Miller and meet with his boss?" Emmett suggested. "If he's the problem, then we need to eliminate him."

## La Cantante

"However, he hasn't done anything to warrant us going to his boss," Bella said. "I don't trust him either, but we need to have some faith."

"Okay, should we do the formal recording with the two songs that we worked on over the weekend?" I asked.

"I think we should," Jasper said. "For experience, at least."

"I know we should," Emmett barked. "We fucking rocked and those musicians we worked with were awesome!"

"I'm hesitant as we are getting close to the end of the school year and finals," Bella said, being the voice of reason. "If they are willing to wait until after we are done with the school year, than I'd be more comfortable."

"But, Bella, you have a shitload of stuff for the wedding to do over the summer," Alice said.

"That's why I have you, Ali," Bella winked. "You have more taste in your pinky toe than I do in my entire body."

"Oh, okay," she said, placated for the moment.

"So, we suggest after we return from Italy? Middle of June?" I asked.

"Works for me," Jasper said, shrugging his shoulders.

"I was planning on staying on campus regardless because of my summer internship, so I'm cool."

"I'm planning our wedding," Bella said dryly.

"Try not to sound so enthused, Bella," I teased.

"I'm excited about getting married, but yeah..."she laughed. "All of the rigmarole, not so much. Can't we just go to Vegas?"

"No!" Rose and Alice yelled.

"Okay, okay," Bella relented. I chuckled and laced my fingers with hers.

"Alright, I'll call Miller and explain our issues and hopefully we can move forward as planned. If not, it was fun while it lasted," I said with a crooked smirk. After our discussion, we decided to watch a movie. We all lounged on the couches and were enthralled by *The Black Swan*. The movie ended and everyone left. Bella was sitting on the couch, fiddling with her engagement ring. "What's wrong, beautiful?"

"Nothing," she sighed.

"I call bullshit," I laughed lightly. "You have your wrinkle." I caressed the adorable wrinkle between her brows when she furrowed them. It smoothed out momentarily, but returned immediately. "What's got you so bothered?"

"Are you mad at me?"

"Why would I be mad at you, Bella?" I asked.

"About the comment about the wedding," she said weakly. "I want to get married to you. Immensely, but the whole charade of it is overwhelming."

"If you want to go to Vegas..." I offered. "I'm all for it."

"No, I'm fine. I just am having Alice issues. She can be so overbearing," Bella sighed.

"That's the Pixie," I chuckled. "You know I can do things for the wedding. I'm more than willing to help."

"You can't try on my dress, Edward. Alice and Rose were trying to get me to ditch classes on Wednesday for a dress fitting," Bella said. "You don't have the chest."

## La Cantante

"No, I don't have boobs. That would be fifty shades of fucked up if I had tits," I said, grabbing my chest. "I rather like yours."

"Ugh, my bug bites," she groaned.

"Bella, you have a beautiful body," I said. "Do I need to show you how beautiful you are? Because, I will." I grabbed her hands and picked her up, slinging her over my shoulder. She squealed and I carried her to the bedroom, flopping her down on the bed. I pinned her down with my hips and ran my nose along her jaw. "You smell so sweet, Bella. Like freesia and strawberries. It's mouthwatering how delicious you smell." Bella whimpered as I nipped at her sensitive skin. I straddled her legs and pulled her up so she was sitting. I reached for the hem of her plum colored tunic and pulled it over her head. I tossed the shirt on the floor and ran my fingers up her arms, across her collarbone, down the valley between her breasts and ending up on her hip, circling her tattoo. "Now, your skin is flawless. The color of alabaster with a hint of pink." I unstraddled her legs and motioned for her to scoot back onto the pillows. I laid on my side, tracing idle circles over her navel. I kissed her lips languidly as I moved my hands over her body. "Your arms are so delicate, but strong at the same time. The power of your conducting pattern is graceful and forceful. It takes all my control to not attack you when you're on the podium."

"Edward," she moaned, fisting her hands into my unruly hair.

"Your hands are exquisite. So small, but very dexterous. The way you play the piano. The way you play *me*," I murmured suggestively in her ear. "It's fucking arousing." My hands moved to her breasts, covering her perfect mounds. "Your breasts are the perfect size. The fit in my hands like that were made for me alone," I said as I massaged her lace covered tits. She rolled on her side, hitching a leg over my hip. I unclasped her bra and slipped it off. The bra landed onto the growing pile of clothes on the floor. My thumbs ran over her taut nipples and she arched at my touch. "So responsive, my love. Do you like when I touch you?" I cooed as I kissed her lips.

"Yes, Edward. I love your hands on me. Your mouth. Your tongue," she moaned.

"Where do you want my mouth and my tongue?" I asked.

"My tits," she begged. I smirked and kissed down her chest, taking one of her breasts into my mouth, swirling her pink bud with my tongue. Her legs were rubbing together, looking for friction. Her hands moved down my body and reached the hem of my sweater. She inched it up with her soft hands, revealing my skin as she moved it up. I removed my mouth from her chest and whipped off my shirt. Bella's hands moved to my own nipples, flicking them with her fingertips. Her mouth was attached to my earlobe, sucking forcefully. I kissed back up her body, capturing her pouty lips in mine. My tongue slid between her lips and danced with hers. She tugged on my hair forcefully.

"I love your lips, Bella. So soft. So full," I murmured against her mouth. "But, I love your other lips, too." I reached for the button of her jeans and undid it. I slowly lowered the fly and eased her jeans off her hips, taking her panties off with the jeans. "So beautiful," I said softly as I kissed down her body, swirling my tongue along her supple skin. My hands moved up her long legs and I massaged lightly. "You have gorgeous legs, Bella. Strong but womanly," I whispered as I moved between her perfect legs. I kissed up her thighs and gazed upon her glistening sex. *Ah, the promised land.* I nibbled along her inner thighs and she wiggled under my touch. I loved that I could make her squirm. I inhaled deeply, relishing her musky, sensual scent. Nothing was more intoxicating than Bella's aroma. Like her, it was perfect and it made me so fucking hard.

"Edward," she moaned. "Please..."

I chuckled and ran my tongue over her body, not quite reaching where she wanted me. Her groans echoed in our bedroom and her legs shifted. I wanted to taste her. Enjoy her body. So I did. I swirled my tongue on her sensitive nub. Bella let out a scream and her hands flopped to the sides of the bed, her breasts bouncing delightfully. I arched a brow and continued my sensual assault on her delicious body. I moved one of my hands down her legs and propped it over my shoulder, spreading her legs further. Her perfect, pink pussy was spread for me and I loved seeing her like this. Moaning, writhing and wanting me. I pulled her soft lips into my mouth sucking lightly and she squeaked. I hummed



## La Cantante

as I flicked my tongue over her clit. Her body undulated with the rhythm of my tongue. *Fuck, that's hot.*

With my other hand, I slipped two fingers into her dripping entrance. She was so wet and I got harder as I knew that I made her that way. I curled my fingers into her body, enjoying the feeling of her slick walls hugging my long fingers. With my pinky, I grazed her ass and she moaned wantonly. *Hmmm, I wonder if she'd be willing to...you know...in the ass...*

Her juices coated my mouth and tongue and I wanted more. I slipped my tongue into her hot pussy along with my fingers and rubbed her clit with my thumb of my other hand. Her muscles fluttered against my mouth and I could feel her lose it. She was close to coming and her body was responding to my ministrations. Her chest was heaving and Bella's hands moved to her breasts, squeezing them with her hands. Her eyes met mine and she smirked as she rolled her hips. I growled and added a third finger to her pussy. I moved my mouth to her clit and I bit down lightly. Her hips bucked and she yelped. I pumped my hand into her pussy and I could feel her begin to clamp down on my fingers. I sucked, nipped and licked her clit as I finger fucked her. Suddenly, Bella's walls clamped down and she came all over, drenching my mouth, tongue and her thighs. I smiled as I kept my lips attached to her body as she rode out her orgasm. Her body stopped twitching and she sat up, looking at me with black eyes. Eyes that shone with desire and passion. She reached for me and practically dragged me up and plunged her tongue into my mouth. I knew she could taste herself and that was such a turn on that she didn't mind it on my lips.

Her hands scraped down my body and she reached for my pants, unbuttoning them and pushing the denim over my hips along with my boxers. "I need you, Edward. I need to feel you," she panted. I snarled and flipped us so she was straddling my waist. Our lips never unattached. She moved above me erotically, her pussy teasing my pulsating cock.

"Bella," I groaned. "You're driving me crazy."

"I know," she smirked. "I want you to take me from behind, Edward. Please, baby."

I sat up and pulled her body flush with mine, biting on her neck. Her arms wrapped around me and she rubbed her pussy all over my ever-growing cock. "Get on your hands and knees," I commanded. She whimpered and got off my lap. She crawled over to the edge of the bed and waved her delectable ass. I got up and bit down on her ass cheek and she gave me a glare. I winked and stood behind her, pulling her forcefully against my chest. I cupped her face and kissed her as my hands grabbed her breasts. Her arms reached above her and tugged on my hair. My hand that was holding her face to mine snaked down her torso and I ran my fingers over her clit. She was already wet again and ready for me. I pulled away and she went back on her hands and knees. I lined my cock up with her entrance and I slowly eased into her core. *So fucking tight.* I was fully sheathed and I stopped moving. I was amazed at how close I was to blowing my load. Bella reached between us and felt our connection. I bit my lip and began moving hips, slowly moving in and out of her tight little body. She rubbed her clit with her fingers as I moved within her body.

"Edward," she moaned as she began moving her ass back toward me. "You feel so good, baby. Harder, please." I grunted and obliged my love. I slammed into her, filling her completely. Bella moaned and fell to her elbows, giving me a different view and a different feeling. Her hand still rubbed her clit at a feverish pace.

"Bella," I breathed. "I love you, so much, baby." I moved faster and harder than I'd ever moved before, feeling the coil in my belly. It was ready to spring and I wanted it. I wanted it bad. "You feel like heaven. I never want to leave," I grunted. "Ever." She moaned and slowly got to her knees. I had to slow down my pace to accommodate for the change in the position. She turned her head and I assaulted her lips with mine as my hands groped her breasts, kneading the pliant flesh with my fingers. She grabbed my hand, moving it to her clit. We worked her body together and she pulled away as she screamed in ecstasy. Her body twitched and she arched against my sweaty torso. Her orgasm triggered mine and I spilled into her body, biting down on her bare shoulder to quell my own scream. Bella fell forward and I slipped out of her body. I rolled to my

## La Cantante

side, pulling Bella to my back. "Do you believe me now when I tell you that you're beautiful?"

"You make me feel that way, Edward," she whispered, lacing her fingers with mine. "I feel like a supermodel when I'm with you."

"You're more gorgeous than those girls who are on the cover the magazines. Do want to know why?" I asked, kissing her temple and brushing her soft hair away from her face. She turned and looked at me expectantly. "You're beautiful here," I said as I pointed to her head, "and here," I said as I rested my hand over her heart. "The most beautiful woman, person, creature on the planet to me."

Bella turned to look at me and her eyes were glistening with tears. "Edward," she murmured. "That is the most thoughtful, beautiful thing anyone has ever told me. I love you so much." She weaved her arms around my neck and nestled into my embrace, pressing kisses to my lips.

"I love you more, *il mio cantante*," I said against her mouth. "Forever and always."

"Always and forever," she smiled. She rolled me onto my back and we went for round two, round three, round four and yeah, you get the point. We made love all night and I couldn't be more content or more complete.

*Okay, I so want to go to Vegas. I want her to be mine...NOW!*

**A/N: Should they got Vegas or stick with regular wedding? Leave me a comment in a review with your opinion. I'm leaning toward the regular wedding, but Edward's resolve is fading fast. Thanks for the reviews!**  
**xxxxx**

# Honors Recital

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 90: Honors Recital

### BPOV

"Bella, we need to practice for the honors recital," Edward called from the office.

"Shit! That's Thursday, right?" I asked.

"Yeah. It's at seven in the evening," Edward said as he padded back into the kitchen.

"Is this really a big deal?" I questioned.

"Huge. Usually, it's only junior and senior performance majors that sing in the honors recital. It's unprecedented that a freshman is even invited," Edward said with a wink. "It's also 'black tie.'"

"Are you wearing your tux?"

"Yep. You'll have to get a dress," Edward said, looking at me with lust in his eyes. "Ask Alice. She'll just love going shopping."

"I think Alice is mad at me," I grumbled.

"Why?"

## La Cantante

"She thinks that we're going to elope to Vegas," I sighed.

"And this is a bad thing because..." Edward joked.

"Edward, I want to be married to you. Like yesterday, but as much as I gripe about the actual planning of the ceremony, I'm looking forward to getting married to you in front of our families and friends," I retorted. "But, Alice is pissed that I even toyed with the idea of eloping."

"We could always go to Vegas, get married and still go through the other ceremony in August," Edward suggested.

"No, I don't feel right deceiving our families like that," I replied. "Let's just stick with the original plan."

"Alright," Edward said as he pulled me into his arms. "I love you, baby."

"I love you, too, Edward," I said, kissing his soft lips. "Let's go practice."

"Your wish is my command," he grinned as he picked up his keys. We drove to Brandon and spent an hour practicing for the recital. Afterward, we went to get some dinner. I did not want to cook. Call me lazy, but that's the truth. We headed back to the apartment and spent the rest of the night studying. It was nice to have Edward in most of my classes. Whatever I missed in regards to notes, he usually had and vice versa.

Around nine, I had enough with studying and I sent Alice a quick text. I asked her to help me find my dress for the recital. She eagerly agreed. We decided to go after University Singers on Wednesday. I headed into the bathroom and showered before going to bed. Edward was fumbling with his guitar in the guest bedroom and I could tell he was working on one of the pieces we had recorded with Twilight. We had yet to contact Miller with our decision about the recordings. Jasper was telling us to wait until after Easter. Emmett was insistent that we do it as soon as possible. However, it was Edward's decision as he was the contact that Miller wanted.

## La Cantante

I crawled into bed and did some light reading for Music Literature. My eyes were drooping and I curled up. I vaguely remembered Edward getting into bed behind me. His arms wrapped around me and he spooned his body protectively around mine. "Love you, *il mio cantante*," he murmured.

"Love you more," I whispered and sleep claimed me.

xx LC xx

"Alice, this is not an excuse for you to buy the entire fucking department store," I grumbled. "I need one dress. One. Singular. Uno. ONE!"

"But, Bella, you can never have too many dresses," Alice whined. "Edward will love you in all of these."

"You are too much, Pixie," I said. "Let's try these on. I'm buying ONE!"

"Party pooper," she sighed. She carried the dressed to the changing room and pushed me inside. I removed my clothes and put on the first dress. It was a lavender monstrosity that looked hideous. It's only redeeming quality was...well there wasn't one. I stomped out of the dressing room and scowled at Alice. "Um, ew. Next."

"Thank goodness you didn't try to sell this to me, Mary Alice. I would have kicked your ass if you said that it was perfect," I said.

"I liked the color on the rack, but it's not good for your skin. You look sallow. The cut's all wrong and it's just blah. Next dress," Alice said forcefully. I groaned and went back into the dressing room. I plucked the pink dress next. It was kind of pretty. Very sweet. I pulled it on and walked out. "Too cutesy."

"Alice, the song I'm singing is about jewels. Rubies, diamonds, emeralds. Get me a jewel-toned dress," I said. "None of this pastel crap."

"Got it, Bella," Alice chirped. "I'll be back. All of the dresses in the room are out!" She skipped off and I heard her tear through the racks, pulling dresses left

and right. Alice returned a few moments later and had a handful of jewel-toned dresses. She took the pastel dresses out of the dressing room. I chose an emerald green dress first. I really loved the color. It was also different than anything I'd ever seen or I'd ever worn. It had an asymmetrical neckline and was cut close to the body. Even before it was on my body, I knew this was the dress I wanted. I eased the satin fabric over my body and it was perfect. I stepped out and gave Alice a triumphant smile. She bounced on her toes and clapped her hands.

After we paid for the dress, Alice wanted to accessorize me. We got some simple jewelry and a pair of pewter colored heels. Alice then told me that she was going to do my hair and makeup for the recital. I didn't fight it. She was so much better at that stuff than me. We then met up with Rose and Angela for dinner, having some girl time. They pressed me about wedding details, but I proclaimed it to be a wedding free zone. We spent the rest of the dinner talking about our guys. Angela and Ben were getting very serious and she said that Ben asked about her ring size. Alice bounced in her chair again as she thought of the prospect of another wedding to plan.

*Mary Alice Cullen, insatiable wedding planning pixie.*

While I declared our dinner to be a wedding-free zone. Rose said that it wasn't a bachelorette party free zone. She plopped down several brochures for my party. All of them included semi-naked men. *Ewwwwwwwww!* I only want to see Edward naked. He's fucking perfect. I just sat quietly as Rose discussed my party. I really didn't want the strippers or all of the debauchery. I just wanted to get married. I told Rose that and she quickly shot me down. I shrugged and sat back.

After dinner, we drove back to Emerson. Alice dropped me off at the apartment and I begrudgingly went upstairs. I was not in a good mood and I'm certain Edward would get the brunt of my bitchiness. I unlocked the door and found Edward sitting on the couch, reading the sociology book. His brows were furrowed and he looked really cute and studious. "Hi," I said sadly.

"Uh oh," he said. "What's wrong?"

## La Cantante

"Attack of the wedding Nazis," I said. "Rose wanted to plan my bachelorette party."

"And...?"

"I don't want one. Rose was insistent on me having one. However, I don't want to get drunk. I don't want half naked men grinding on me. I just want to get married. That's it," I said, my voice raising as I continued my tirade. I sat down on the couch, tossing my dress on the chair in the room. "I... ARGH!"

"Bella, if you don't want a bachelorette party, then you don't have to have a bachelorette party," Edward said. "Emmett suggested a bachelor party for me, but I refused. He actually backed down. Surprisingly enough. However, I think it was due in part that I'm marrying his sister."

"No bachelorette party," I said, leaning forward on my knees. "Rose will have to deal."

"Miller called," Edward said.

"Um, wow. Distraction much?" I snorted.

"What? No bachelorette party. Conversation's over. Onto the next," Edward said with a crooked smirk. "Anyhow, Miller called."

"What did he say?"

"I told him what we discussed and he got all huffy. He told me that we were wasting the time of Twilight Recording Studios. I then told him to fuck off. His tune changed mighty quickly after that. He said that he would meet with our accommodations," Edward said warily. "However, I'm still going to go to his boss. Explain the situation."

"Seems wise," I replied, looking at my fingers.

"Bella, what's wrong?" Edward asked.



## La Cantante

"Nothing. Just the whole bachelorette thing. And the recital. And Easter. And Renee. I'm just overwhelmed."

"The bachelorette party is solved. The recital will be a cakewalk for you. In regards to Easter and Renee, you'll be fine. Just don't kill her," Edward said with a grin.

"Easier said than done. She's better but she's still bitter about our getting married," I scowled. "What time is our flight on Friday?"

"We leave at 8. So, we have to be at the airport by six," Edward said. "Sorry about the early wakeup calls."

"No big deal. I'll survive," I said with a shrug. "I'll probably just sleep on the plane. You make a comfortable pillow."

"Thanks, Bella," Edward said dryly. "I'm glad I'm good for *something*."

"You're good for and lot of things," I said as I got up and straddled his legs.

"You're good for kissing. Cuddling. Nuzzling. Licking. Sucking. Nibbling," I whispered as I kissed and demonstrated each thing. "Fucking."

"Holy hell," he said. He picked me up and ran us to the bedroom. We spent the next few hours demonstrating the last thing I mentioned. Ohhh, it was so good. Edward's tongue and cock should be bronzed. I mean, seriously.

xx LC xx

"What if I forget the words?"

"Bella, you're singing in French. No one is going to know," Rose chortled as she curled my hair.

"But, I'LL know," I said, nibbling on my fingertips. "I can't believe that this is happening. I mean...I'm so going to fuck up."

## La Cantante

"Do I need to get Edward in here to lick your pussy and get you calm down," Rose said, smacking my head.

"What?"

"You're always so mellow after you and Edward have at it," Rose giggled. "We can always tell when smexing is going on in the Cullen apartment."

"Oh my God!" I blushed. "I can't believe you said that."

"Yo, Edward! Come here!" Rose shouted.

"What?" Edward said as he sauntered into the bathroom, sitting on the bathtub.

"Calm down your fiancée," Rose said, giving him an eyebrow. "Lick her clit."

"Rosalie!" Edward said. "I'm flummoxed! You can't just say that! What happened to the demure Rosalie Hale from the beginning of the year? The one that was terrified of sex and all things sexual?"

"She died. A pleasurable death. Death by orgasm. Emmett is quite talented. He does this one thing with his hips..." Rose said.

"Um, gross. That's my *brother* you're talking about," I said. "I really don't want to think about what Emmett does. In bed."

"Are you worrying about your words?" Rose said pointedly.

"No. I'm worried that I soaked through my panties," I said, a blush creeping over my cheeks.

"Can I go now?" Edward asked awkwardly.

"No. Please stay. If you stay, then perhaps Rose'll behave," I said.

## La Cantante

"Nope. I have no shame. So, Edward? How many inches of deliciousness are you?" Rose asked with a snicker.

"And that's my cue to leave. When you ask how big my cock is? Yeah. Bella get's to know that and NO ONE else," Edward said. "Fuck me."

"I'm open for a threesome," Rose giggled. "Bella's obviously satisfied."

Edward's hands went to his hair and he screamed. "Unbelievable!" He stomped out of the bathroom, mumbling as he left,

"Rosalie Lillian Hale, you are...you are...There are no words. None," I said as I stared off into space.

"Distracted you from the words, right?" she smirked. I nodded. "Then my job is done."

"Where's Alice? Why isn't she here?" I asked,

"She'll be here to put on your makeup. I wanted to talk to you about your bachelorette party."

"About that," I began. "I really don't want one. It's just not me. At all."

"I know. So, I'm amending my plan. We're going to throw you a lingerie shower. All the naughty goodness of lingerie and bachelorette party, but no strippers or debauchery," Rose said diplomatically. Her fingers moved deftly in my hair, twisting it and placing it into an elegant up-do. A few moments later, Alice breezed in and attacked my face. She worked quickly and within a half hour, I was proclaimed beautiful. I rolled my eyes and stood up. The woman standing in the mirror wasn't me. She looked elegant, graceful, and beautiful. I shook my head and walked to put on my dress and shoes. Alice assisted in zipping my dress up and she squealed in excitement. Rose smirked and said she'd do me.

*What is up with her? Horny much?*

## La Cantante

We walked out to the living room and found Edward sitting on the couch, wearing his tuxedo. The only difference in his appearance was his tie and vest. It was the exact same shade as my dress. His hair was somewhat tamed and he was fussing with the music he held in his hands. He looked up at me and his emerald eyes, which matched my dress and his vest, sparkled. "Bella, you are absolutely stunning," he breathed. "You'll undoubtedly be the most beautiful woman in the recital."

"I'm not there to be beautiful, Edward," I laughed. "I'm there to sing. But, thank you. You look so handsome. But you always do."

"We have to head to Brandon and do some warming up," Edward said. "Then you're going to knock their socks off."

"We'll lock up, Edward," Alice said with a wink. "See you at the recital, Bella. You'll do wonderfully. I have..."

"...a feeling," we all replied. Alice scowled and stomped back to the bathroom. Edward picked up his keys and we headed downstairs to the car. He gallantly opened the car door and assisted me into the Volvo. He winked and jogged to the driver's seat. He drove us to Brandon and we met in the choir room with the rest of the recital participants. A recognized a few people from University Singers. The rest of the participants were instrumentalists and I didn't really know them. I was the youngest singer there and I was so fucking nervous. Edward must have picked up on it and he laced his fingers with mine.

"You'll be perfect," he whispered into my ear. "Like Alice, I have a feeling. Don't worry about it and have fun."

I took a deep breath and leaned against him. "Thanks, Edward. I'm so worried though."

"Whatever happens, Bella, I'm proud of you. I love you and at the end of the night, that will not change," Edward said as he kissed my lips chastely. "Do you want to run the piece in my practice room?"

## La Cantante

"We probably should." We went up to his practice room and marked my piece. I was not singing full voice. I didn't want to blow out Edward's ear drums. He teased me more often than not about the power of my voice. He almost threatened to take away the microphones while we were singing with Breaking Midnight. I wasn't that loud. He then said I was louder when I came when we made love. *And cue blush.*

"Bella, you are going to do perfectly," Edward said as he got up from his piano. "I'm more worried about fucking up. The middle section is a bear."

"And you hate sharps," I snorted.

"That I do," Edward grumbled. "Let's head back down." I nodded and laced my fingers with his. We made it back to the choir room. The rest of the musicians were waiting until the beginning of the recital. Edward picked up a program and noticed that I was the last singer of the evening. "Bella, they're saving the best for last." I smiled weakly and tugged on his hand, sitting in our usual seats for University Singers.

"Can we pray before we perform with Breaking Midnight?" I asked. "I need all the help I can get."

"Of course, Bella," Edward said as he put his arm around my waist. We sat like that until the recital started. The singers went into the green room of Brandon while we waited to perform. As the singers performed, they stayed out in the auditorium of Brandon Hall. After an hour and half, the room was completely empty except for Edward and me. He grabbed my hand and we bowed our heads. We said our usual prayer that we used before our Breaking Midnight gigs. "You're going to kick ass, Bella."

"I hope so," I whispered as the stage manager poked her head into the room. Edward and I walked to the stage. The emcee announced me and Edward as my accompanist. He squeezed my hand and we walked out onto the stage together. Even though the butterflies were attacking my belly, I walked out confidently. I stood in the crook of the piano and looked at Edward, giving him a slight nod. He winked at me and began the introduction of my piece. As he played the

## La Cantante

insane piano part, I took a deep breath before I began the recitative. I acted coy and sweet. As the song progressed, my coyness morphed into a more playful charade. I moved slightly in the crook of the piano as I pantomimed the actions of the song. As I came close to the end, I smiled slightly and prepared for the final note. I breathed deeply and the final note rang through the auditorium, shimmering to the rafters. The final chords of the piano part ended and the crowd broke into a thunderous applause. I took a feminine curtsy and pointed to Edward. He stood gallantly at the piano and bowed. He then looked at me and walked toward me. He picked up my hand, kissing my knuckles. He ushered me forward and I took another curtsy, holding Edward's hand.

Edward led me off the stage and we took our seats in the auditorium. I was the final singer. There was a group of string performers that did the final song of the program. After the string performers, Eleazar came out and thanked everyone for coming out and all the performers for sharing their talents. The audience applauded again and the lights came up. We stood up and Edward embraced me, lifting me slightly off the ground. "Bella, you were fucking awesome. I've never heard anything like it. There are no words to describe what I heard," Edward said with awe in his voice.

"It was the voice of an angel," Esme said from behind me.

"Esme," I smiled as I extricated myself from Edward's loving embrace. She hugged me tightly. Carlisle was behind her and he hugged me as well.

"Carlisle! Thank you both of you for coming."

"It's not every day my daughter sings in the honors recital," Carlisle winked. "As a freshman."

"Dad, she's not your daughter," Edward teased as he linked his arms around my waist. "That would be a little gross. I'd be marrying my sister."

"Well, I already feel like she's my daughter," Esme smiled. "You were remarkable. The best one of the night."

## La Cantante

"Damn right, Isabelly! I didn't understand a damn thing you sang, but it was beautiful," Emmett said as he hugged me, spinning me around in a circle. "And Edward, I didn't know that you did the classical shit."

"Emmett, watch your mouth," I chided.

"Oops, sorry. I didn't mean to offend Mama and Papa C," Emmett laughed. Rosalie smacked him on the shoulder.

"We'll let it slide. This one time, Emmett," Esme said playfully. She looked at me and took my hands. "You fucking rocked."

"Mom!" Edward said, his brows shooting to his hairline.

"I never thought you had it in you," Alice sniggered. "Go Mom!"

"Esme, you're my hero," I laughed as I hugged her. She returned my hug and I felt her laughing with me. Emmett put his arms around both of us and eventually were crushed in a huge group embrace with Esme and I in the middle. Our love fest was broken up by Carlisle explaining that he and Esme had to go. Esme had a meeting in New York City in the morning and he had rounds at the hospital. We bid them farewell. Edward and I wished them a Happy Easter as we were traveling to Jacksonville at the ass crack of dawn.

The rest of our group wanted to take Edward and I out to eat, but we needed to head back to the apartment and pack for our jaunt to Jacksonville. Alice told us that we were going to go out the following week in celebration of a job well-done. What the pixie wants, the pixie gets.

As we were leaving, Edward and I bumped into Eleazar as he was leaving. "Bella! Edward! You did marvelously tonight. You've made the record books as being the first and only freshman to make it to the honor's recital and be the final singer," Eleazar said with a proud smile. "We are so incredibly proud of you."

## La Cantante

"Thank you, Eleazar," I blushed. "I'm glad I could make you proud. It means a lot to me."

"Bella, you are the single most talented singer I've ever had the pleasure of working with," Eleazar said as he took my hands. "Both of you show maturity and confidence beyond your years. Edward, you are talented..."

"I know, Eleazar. It's cool," Edward said with a chuckle. "I am nowhere near as talented vocally as my awesome fiancée."

"Edward, you have a beautiful voice," I said, gently caressing his cheek.

"Bella, you blow me out of the water when it comes to singing," he said, kissing me chastely. "I'll stick with the piano. I can still kick your ass there."

Eleazar let out a belly laugh and clapped Edward on the shoulder. "You are honestly one of the most talented pianists I've worked with. I'm glad that you are confident in your abilities."

"Yes, sir," Edward said with a wink. "Unfortunately, we do need to go. We're catching a flight to visit Bella's mom in Jacksonville. So, I hope you and Carmen have a wonderful Easter."

"You as well," Eleazar said with a smile. "Fantastic job. I'll see you both on Monday."

"Have a good night, Eleazar," I replied. Edward and I walked out to the Volvo and we drove home. Edward's eyes darkened once we got into the apartment. His loving gaze turned almost predatory as he clicked the door shut. "Edward, we have to be up in less than eight hours and we still need to pack."

"We'll go naked," he growled. "I've been fighting throwing you down and having my wicked way with you all night. You look sinful in that dress and I just want to hear your scream my name."

*And I soaked my panties.*



Edward strode to me and his lips were on mine, caressing and forceful at the same time. His arms wrapped around me and he pulled me flush to his body. His mouth moved from my mine, licking and nibbling a hot trail to my ear. He pulled my lobe into his teeth. "I fucking want you, Isabella. Please let me have you." I whimpered and my hands weaved into his hair. His hands reached down and he lifted the skirt to my dress. As he reached my thighs, he picked me up. I wrapped my legs around his waist and I could feel his arousal press into my heat. I ground my hips against him and he groaned. "Keep that up, Bella and we won't make it to the bedroom."

"Here," I moaned. "Fuck me here." Edward pulled away and looked at me skeptically. I arched a brow and smirked seductively. "I need to feel you inside, Edward."

"Fuck me," he said as he reached for my panties. With a forceful tug, they were no more and were tossed over his shoulder. He put me down briefly as he undid his pants and removed his tuxedo jacket. With his one of his hands, his fingers circled my clit. I was dripping and his ministrations were not helping. "You are soaked, Bella. Do I make you this wet?"

"Only you, Edward. Now stop talking and fuck me," I snarled as I pulled his face to mine. I sucked his bottom lip between my teeth and bit down. Hard. He groaned and lifted me up, arranging my skirt so he could delve into my wet heat. He pushed me against the wall and slammed into body. No sweet murmurings, no words of love. This was raw, dirty fucking. Something completely different from what we usually did. I loved it. I groaned as Edward pounded into me. I kissed his lips and removed his tie, vest and unbuttoned his shirt. His face was covered with sweat and it was hot to see him this worked up. Edward was always the more vocal, experienced one in our relationship, but he was always so gentle and reverent toward me. This was a different side of him.

My fingers scraped along his back and he hissed as I pushed them into his muscular back. His mouth moved from mine and he sucked on my neck, biting down on my skin. I moaned loudly and rocked against his hips. "Fucking sexy. You are so fucking sexy, Bella. Do you like it when I slam into like this?" he

## La Cantante

growled. I whimpered and wrapped my legs tighter around his waist. "Answer me, Isabella. Do you like it when I fuck you?"

"I love it, Edward. Harder," I said, matching his tone. "I want you fuck me senseless." He smirked and he angled his body so he could move more deeply into me. I leaned back against the wall and looked down between us. I could see his perfect cock slide in and out of my warmth. I moaned and rubbed my clit.

"God damn it," Edward breathed as he watched me rub my clit. Play with myself as he slammed his cock into me. His green eyes moved up my body and then held my gaze. His mouth moved aggressively against mine and I could feel him get harder inside my body. "Bella, I'm so fucking close," he breathed against my mouth. "Come with me. Now, Bella. I need to feel you clamp down on my dick."

"Fuck," I shrieked as I came, fast and hard. "Edward!"

"That's it, Bella. Scream my name. Who makes you come? Who makes you come all over?" he sneered.

"You, Edward," I panted as he spilled into my body. His legs buckled and he slid down the wall, taking me with him. We lay against the wall in our foyer, panting like we had run a marathon. Edward's head was resting on my shoulder and I gently wiped his brow that was covered in sweat. "You okay?"

"I'm fucking awesome," he breathed. "That was the hottest thing, ever. However, I'm mush. A puddle of goo. I have no bones. And I think I ruined your gorgeous dress." I looked down and there was some of Edward's spooge on the dress. I shrugged and kissed his lips. "You're not pissed?"

"At the fact that we had the most amazing sex right now? No," I said as I repositioned my body. Edward's now flaccid cock slipped out of me and he groaned. "Oh, man up. You just fucked me against a wall."

## La Cantante

"Doesn't mean I wanted to be separated from you," he pouted. I rolled my eyes and got up. Edward looked at me with a dejected expression on his face. "I wasn't too rough, was I?"

"No, Edward. You were fine," I said. "I actually enjoyed it. A lot. I'm pretty certain I came twice while you were inside me, in succession."

He grinned lasciviously and licked his lips. "I know. I felt it. I love the way you gush all over my cock, baby," he said as he sat up on his knees. He stood up and kissed me forcefully. He picked me up bridal style and took us to the bedroom.

The packing, suffice it to say, didn't get done. Making love to my fiancé was obviously more important. Or should I say, fucking.

**A/N: Yay! La Cantante update! WOOT WOOT! Up next, Jacksonville and Renee. Easter fun time and preparations for the end of the school year. Leave me love (or hate...) xoxox**

# Jacksonville

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 91: Jacksonville

### EPOV

"Edward, wake up. We've landed," Bella croaked. "Ready for some fun in the sun?"

"I'm ready for more sleep. Who's brilliant idea was it to spend the entire night making love?" I asked, opening an eye.

"That would be yours, genius," Bella snickered. "I tried to be the voice of reason, but NOOOOOOOOO. Someone was horny and needed to have me. Eight times. God damn it, Edward. You're like a machine."

"And how many times did you come?" I teased. Bella blushed and hid behind her hair. "That's what I thought."

"I'm also walking funny, Cullen," she said, smacking my chest.

"But just think *why*..." I said with a chaste kiss on the lips. *Hmmmm, I want more.* I deepened the kiss, but Bella wasn't having it. I pouted. "What?"

"We're on a plane. In Jacksonville. Waiting to see my hair-brained *mother*," Bella chastised. "Stop being such a horny bastard."

"But I'm *your* horny bastard and you love me," I said, fluttering my eyelashes.

## La Cantante

"I suppose. Let's go see Renee," Bella said with a heavy sigh. We got up from our seats and headed to the exit of the plane. As we walked up the jetway, we were assaulted with hot, humid air and it was oppressive. So different than New York. It still had a significant chill in the air. My back was beginning to feel damp from sweat. I was not used to this. It also appeared neither was Bella. Her cheeks were flushed and she was pulling her long heavy hair into a ponytail. "If we ever move, let's not go to Florida. This sucks and it's only April."

"I can't imagine it in the summer," I chuckled. "Are you okay?"

"Renee better be good or we're driving back to New York," Bella said pointedly. "I don't think I can handle her immature shenanigans. At all."

"Bella, if I can have a relationship with Senior, you can handle Renee," I said, lacing my fingers with hers as we entered the air conditioned airport. "You can do anything."

"Sure, Edward," she said, rolling her eyes. "Phil and Renee are meeting us at the baggage claim."

We walked through the crowded airport and headed to the baggage claim. Bella was getting more and more tense as we moved through the airport. I wrapped my arm around her waist and kissed her soft hair. She took a deep breath and gave me a smile. A tight smile, but a smile nonetheless. We got our bag. Bella was texting Phil to inform him that we were here. Phil's text was a bit surprising. He said that he thought that we were coming tonight. Not this morning. Phil was at work and Renee was doing some voodoo shit. Yoga or something.

"Bella, breathe," I said, trying to calm her.

The look in her eyes was murderous and she glared at me. "I sent her the fucking flight information. Three times. THREE! To all of her email addresses. I also sent it to Phil."

## La Cantante

"Come on, beautiful. I'll rent a car and we'll drive to Renee's," I offered.

"But..."

"No buts. We'll be fine. Do you know how to get to her house?" I asked.

"Um, sort of?" Bella whipped out her phone again and was texting. Phil gave her directions to their house as we walked to a car rental counter. They gave me shit, again, because of my being under the age of 25, but what-the-fuck-ever. I'll pay the extra money. Chill. I'm a good driver, asshole.

With Phil's directions, we drove a half hour to Renee and Phil's house. It was a small ranch style home and it had the stereotypical 'Florida' look to it. Bright colors, palm trees and a lanai. *A lanai! I feel like I'm in a Golden Girls episode.* I parked the small sedan that I rented on the street. I wanted something flashier, but since we didn't have a reservation we were given the standard vehicle. *Yay, a Ford Focus.* Shoot me now, I'm in hell.

Bella got the key from a fake rock in the garden and let us into the tiny home. It was lived-in, that's for sure. The furniture was too big for the tiny space and it was mismatched. Bella sighed and dropped her bags on the couch. "This is 'home sweet home,'" she grumbled.

"Lovely," I snickered. Bella went into the kitchen and checked the fridge for some food. She groaned and grabbed the garbage can. She was forcefully throwing things away and was cursing her mother. "What's wrong?"

"Half of the food in here is expired," Bella snapped. "The other half is unrecognizable. Can we just go home? Back to your parents' house? I don't have clean out their fridge. I just know that I'm going to be making Easter dinner and everything is going to fall on my shoulders."

"Bella, relax. You're stressing out over nothing," I said, pulling her away from the rank fridge. *Jeez, did an animal die in there?*

## La Cantante

"You smell that, don't you Edward. I can see the look on your face," she said. "It's gross. Let's just go to a hotel and spend the whole Easter weekend recreating what happened last night. This is already the worst trip, ever."

"Hello? Who's there?" called Renee.

"I lied. It just got worse," she groaned as her head fell to my chest. "Hi, Mom. Did you forget about something?"

"Bella! Edward!" Renee said with a look of complete surprise. "What are you doing here? You're not due in for another eight hours or so."

"No, Renee. We're right on time," Bella snapped. "I sent you the flight information and you said you would pick us up at the airport at eleven in the morning. We got to the airport and you weren't there. Phil said that he was told that our flight was coming in at eleven at night."

"Bella, I'm so sorry," Renee said as she went to hug her. Bella held her hands up and gave her mom the evil eye. "How did you get here?"

"We rented a car," I explained. "Phil gave Bella directions."

"Since you wouldn't pick up your damn phone," Bella said, glaring at her mom.

"Bella, I'm sorry. I really am," Renee said, looking like a scolded child. "Let me take both of you out for lunch and we'll catch up."

"No thanks, Renee. I'm going to take Edward to the beach because I need to get out of here before I go postal on you," Bella said. She laced her fingers with mine and tugged on my hand. I followed her and she got into our dinky rental car. She gave us some directions to a local beach and I drove us there. Bella was fuming silently in the front seat. I parked the car and we walked onto the beach. Bella removed her shoes and rolled up her jeans. I followed suit. "I am so over taking care of my mother."

## La Cantante

"I know, Bella. But she's the only mother you're going to get," I said. I eased off my button up shirt and left on my t-shirt underneath. It was fucking hot. The blazing sand wasn't helping either. "I would rather have my mom and take care of her..."

"I'm sorry, Edward," Bella said sadly. "I am such a bitch. I never realized. I forgot...so sorry."

"Bella, don't apologize. You're lucky. You have both of your parents. They love you. In their own way," I chuckled. "Though, Charlie is a little more put together than Renee."

"You can say that again," Bella grumbled. "I don't want to sound ungrateful or anything, but I'm the child. My parents were supposed to take care of me. I was doing laundry, cooking dinner, balancing the checkbook, and all those 'grown up things' by the time I was nine. If I didn't, I would have gone to school in dirty clothes, eaten cereal and the power wouldn't have been on because Renee would have forgotten to pay the damn bill. Now, it's still the same."

"How so? You're not living with her," I said.

"No, but you saw what we walked into," Bella said, looking at me over her sunglasses. "I'm surprised that Phil puts up with it."

We sat on the beach, listening to the waves crash on the shore. Bella was still radiating anger and frustration. I wanted to do something to make it better for her, but I wasn't sure what. I reached for her hand, but she pulled away. "Bella, don't shut me out. Please, beautiful?"

"Can you give me some time? I don't know. A half hour or so?" she asked. Her doe brown eyes were filling with tears. "I just need some time to think and seethe."

"Okay, love. I'll go get some lunch and then I'll be back," I said. I got up and wiped off the sand from my jeans, kissing Bella's head as I left. I went to the car and drove to McDonald's. I ate a quick lunch and sent a text to Alice and



## La Cantante

Emmett. I told them about the Renee snafu. Emmett responded immediately, saying he was going rip Renee a new one. I told him not to bother. Bella was well on her way. I then asked him to call her. I was sitting in McDonald's when Phil arrived with some of his co-workers. He saw me and gave me a wave as he walked to my seat.

"Hey, Edward," Phil said. "Did you get lost?"

"No. Bella is ready to lose a gasket," I sighed.

"She's pretty pissed that Renee didn't come to pick you guys up?"

"It's more than that," I said, looking at Bella's step father. He was in his thirties. His blond hair was thinning and his blue eyes were sparkling. Like he had something up his sleeve. "Bella let us into the house and it was like it wasn't ready for our visit."

"Not that I agree with Renee, but she did expect you until later today," Phil chuckled. "But, I see your point. Renee is a bit of a flake, but I love her."

"Did you know Renee when Bella was younger?" I asked.

"Renee and I started dating when Bella was in middle school. I was amazed at how mature she was. Bella always took care of the house, the cooking, the cleaning, bills," Phil said with a frown. "Too much for a thirteen year old to handle. I didn't want to say anything as we were just dating. Then when we got married, Bella decided to move to Forks to be with her dad."

"Now, what is wrong with that picture?" I asked, a bit more harshly than I intended.

"I see," Phil grimaced. "Renee should have been the mom and Bella the daughter. Not vice versa."

"Then couple that with her mistaken time of the flights and us walking into the house. Bella went to make us some lunch and she had a fit, throwing out half

your fridge," I said.

"Fuck," Phil said, as he rubbed his face. "Bella doesn't need this. You don't either. Why don't you both stay at a hotel and I'll spring for it?"

"Phil, that's not the point. If we do stay at a hotel, I can certainly pay for it. The bigger picture is Bella's relationship with Renee. Or lack of relationship. I'm giving Bella and Renee until tomorrow to talk before I intervene. Neither one of them will like me, but something needs to be done," I said.

"Let me make a suggestion," Phil said. "You talk to Renee alone. Bella's spewed at her until she's blue in the face and Renee doesn't listen to me. We love each other but I'm just a pretty face."

"Doesn't it bother you that that's how she feels?" I asked.

"Nah. I know in her heart I'm more than that," Phil said. "I love her and she loves me. That's all that matters."

My phone chirped from my pocket.

*If you're ready to head back to the house of horrors, we can go. Thanks for giving me my time. - B*

*No problem, beautiful. I love you - E*

*Love you too. See you in a few - B*

I slipped my phone back into my pocket. Phil was sighing and his brow was furrowed. "What are you guys going to do?"

"I don't know. Honestly. I'll ask Bella. If she wants to go to a hotel, then that's what's going to happen. If she wants to stay, then that's the option we go with," I said. "I don't want to put you or Renee out. Nor do I want us to be uncomfortable."

## La Cantante

"You are too smart, Edward," Phil laughed.

"Eh, I try. Anyhow, I have to pick up my lovely fiancée from the beach," I said. "Perhaps we'll see you for dinner. Sorry about butting into your lunch."

"No big deal. I hate those guys anyway. Too old," Phil said with a dramatic eye roll. "See you later tonight."

He got up from the table and got his lunch. I went out to the car and drove to the spot on the beach where I left Bella. She was sitting on a picnic table, playing with her phone. Her cheeks were red and she looked like she had been crying. *Lighten the mood, Cullen.*

"So, supposedly there's this hot brunette who is looking for a ride. Do you know who that would be?" I teased as I sat down next to her on the table. She didn't respond. "Bella?"

"I want to go home," she sniffled.

"Don't say that, beautiful. You're overtired and emotional from our journey. Let's get some sleep and if you still feel the same way tomorrow morning, I'll book the next available flight. Or we could just drive to Disneyworld," I suggested. "Have fun at the House of the Mouse."

"Where are we going to go? I can't go back to Renee's house. I refuse to stay there," Bella said with fire in her eyes. "I may sound like a spiteful, hateful bitch but I didn't come down here to clean her house and step in like before. Perhaps she'll have me pay the phone bill for shits and giggles."

"We can stay at a hotel, Bella. Not a big deal," I said. "We'll drive back and then I'll book us a room somewhere for tonight. Okay?" Bella nodded and I helped her off the table. We got into the car and drove back to Renee's home. I parked on the street again and we walked up to the front door. Renee was inside and she scouring the kitchen.

## La Cantante

"You're back," Renee said as she ran up to Bella, attempting to give her a hug. "What?"

"Mom, Edward and I are going to stay at a hotel tonight," Bella said curtly. "We're just here for our bags."

"But..."

"No, we're doing this. I'm tired. I'm cranky and I don't particularly want to deal with this," Bella said as she motioned to the house, "right now."

"Bella, please don't leave. I'm cleaning. See?" Renee said.

"It's more than the damn cleaning, Renee," Bella snapped. "Come on, Edward."

"I'm sorry, Renee," I said with a frown. "Hopefully, we'll see you later." I picked up the bag and followed Bella out. I handed her the keys and she looked at me with a look of confusion. I explained that I needed to find us a hotel. We drove around Jacksonville until I managed get us booked at Holiday Inn Express. Not the Ritz Carlton, but it'll do in a pinch. We checked into the hotel and went up to the room. We were in the door and Bella nearly sprinted to the bed. She crawled under the covers, sobbing. Sad, gut wrenching sobs. I wrapped my arms around her, holding her to my chest. I soothed her until she cried herself out. She fell asleep against my body. My eyes eventually drooped closed and I fell into a dreamless sleep.

xx LC xx

I woke up a few hours later and it was twilight. The sun was dipping below the horizon and I was in the bed, alone. "Bella?" I got up and padded through the room. I noticed that she was sitting on the balcony, curled up in a ball. I opened the door and sat down next to my love. "Feel better?"

"Not really," she mumbled. "I still want to go home."

## La Cantante

"Well, I still want you to get a good night's sleep before we make that decision. While the nap was helpful, it wasn't enough. I'm going to run and get some food. Do you want anything?"

"I don't care," she said with a sigh. "Whatever you're getting is fine with me."

"Okay, love. I'll be back. Call if you want me to pick up anything," I said. She nodded and put her head back on her knees. I went inside, grabbing my wallet, rental car keys and glasses. I went downstairs and hopped into the wonderful Ford Focus and drove back to Renee and Phil's. I knocked on the door and Phil opened it up. His eyes widened and then he nodded. He ushered me inside and led me to the family room. He walked back to wherever Renee was and he told her that I was here. She asked if Bella was with me and he said no. Renee huffed and she walked into the family room.

"Hello, Edward," she said coldly.

"Renee, I'm not here to cause any trouble."

"Right, Edward. Bella was perfectly fine before she met you," she seethed.

"She still is fine," I retorted. "However, your actions or rather inaction hurt her. Very much."

"Right. She was a spoiled brat," Renee spat. "She has no right to pass judgment."

"You didn't spend nearly two hours holding your sobbing daughter because you forgot what time her flight got in. You didn't spend two hours comforting her over your actions when she was younger. She was broken up," I snapped. "She still is. It's almost reminiscent of when she had her accident with Jacob. She's a shell right now."

"Who are you to say how I raised my daughter? You're what? Nineteen? Twenty? What do you know about raising a child?" she fumed.

## La Cantante

"I know enough that a thirteen year old shouldn't have to balance a checkbook to make sure that the bills are paid, or cook dinner for their parents. I know enough that hugs and comfort are invaluable. I know enough that your relationship with your husband shouldn't overshadow your relationship with your daughter," I said, trying to keep my voice calm.

"How dare you," Renee said.

"No. How dare you," I said forcefully. "I know that you and Bella had a unique relationship. Where she was essentially the adult. Because of that twist, she's confused, hurt and God knows what else."

"I took care of my daughter," Renee said.

"When?" I asked.

"When she had chicken pox," Renee responded.

"What age was that?"

"Um, nine? I think?" Renee said, nibbling her fingers.

"When was the last time you went out of your way to help her? Take care of her?"

"After her accident," Renee retorted.

"No. You didn't. You were too busy passing judgment about our relationship and saying we were too young to get married. You didn't once ask how Bella was or what her condition or prognosis was. I mean no disrespect, Renee, but you have made some very challenging choices and it's wearing on Bella. She's done. I mean done. Ready to wash her hands of this. She wants me to book a flight back home. She wanted to go today. However, I told her that we would stay the night. But if she still feels the same way tomorrow morning, we're leaving. Bella is the only daughter you have. You're her only mother. It would pain me to see her lose that relationship with you. I lost my mom at the age of

nine and I would give anything to get her back."

"Did you and your mom have a falling out?" Renee asked quietly.

"She's dead," I said curtly. "I also lost my father too. He abandoned me. We're only now beginning to rebuild our relationship. It's strained, but it's a start. I don't want Bella to deal with that type of stress. She's incredibly strong, but it's weighing on her. She doesn't need you as a friend, confidant or buddy. She needs you to be her mother. Nurturing, caring, and loving." I stood up and headed toward the door. Phil looked at me, slack-jawed. He subversively held out a fist and I pounded it. "We're staying at the Holiday Inn Express near the airport, room 425, if you want to salvage your relationship with Bella. It would behoove you to do so." I opened the door and went to the car.

I stopped by Taco Bell and picked up a quick meal before driving back to the hotel. I rode up the elevator and opened the door to the room. Bella was sitting on the bed, watching some television. She had on her glasses and she was idly flipping the channels. "Did you go to Mexico to get dinner?" she teased.

"Yo quiero Taco Bell," I said in my Taco-Bell Chihuahua voice. "And no, I didn't go to Mexico. I got lost."

"Sure, Cullen," she teased.

"I did. I swear," I lied. "Eat up, Bella. You haven't had anything since that muffin at the airport." Bella gave me a pointed look and took out a few tacos. She pushed the rest of the Taco Bell food to me and I ate it greedily. *I'm a growing boy. Shut the fuck up.*

We ended up watching a pay-per-view movie before settling into bed for the night. I didn't mention to Bella that I essentially told off her mom. I was afraid of her reaction, honestly. However, it needed to be said. Hopefully, Renee would take my scathing words into consideration and try to reconcile with Bella. Her selfish behavior had hurt Bella enough and it needed to stop.

## La Cantante

I got very little sleep. Bella's nightmares came back with a vengeance. She woke up more times than I could count screaming and clawing at me. I felt so helpless. After the third or fourth nightmare, I gave Bella her anti-anxiety medication. She hemmed and hawed, but finally relented when I pointed at the clock. It was nearly three in the morning and we had barely slept. As soon as Bella took her anti-anxiety meds, she calmed down and fell into a dreamless sleep. I could not. I was tempted to pop one, but that would be wrong on so many levels. So, I just held Bella until she stirred a few hours later. She looked up at me, her brown eyes dead. Void of all emotion. She was still feeling the effects of the Ativan.

"You didn't sleep," she stated.

"No," I sighed. "Too worried about you."

"You look like shit, Edward," she said flatly.

"Thanks. So do you," I snapped. She cowered and rolled out of my arms, sniffing quietly. "Sorry, Bella. I shouldn't have snapped at you."

"No, you're right. I should be apologizing," she cried. "I'm sorry."

"Bella, get some more sleep. You're exhausted. I'm going to hop on the computer and possibly check flights. Okay?"

She nodded minutely and curled up. I picked up my laptop from my messenger bag, sitting at the desk in the hotel room. I logged onto the free Wi-Fi and checked available flights to home. Based on the night that Bella had, we'd be spending Easter with my parents. Not that I'm complaining, but it's still not good that Bella can't salvage the relationship with her mom. I was secretly hoping that Renee would swallow her pride and come to our hotel. But I wasn't holding my breath. I found a flight that would be leaving Jacksonville by three and we'd be back in New York by seven. I didn't book it, but I kept it in my mind as Bella tossed and turned on the king sized bed in the hotel.



## La Cantante

I took a quick shower before I eventually curled up on the couch and dozed. I was woken up by a timid knock on the door. I rubbed my eyes, looking over at the mess that was the bed. *If only we could have enjoyed the bed as opposed to tortured it.* I sighed and walked to the door. I looked through the peephole and saw a very nervous Renee standing outside. She was biting her lip. Just like Bella does when she's anxious. I opened up the door and stared at Renee. She jumped when I did and she gave me a weak smile. "Is Bella here?"

"She's sleeping," I said flatly. "We didn't get much last night."

"I'm sorry," Renee mumbled. "So sorry. Is she alright?"

"I'm not sure. We haven't talked much this morning," I sighed. "Come in." Renee came into the room and danced back and forth on her feet. "Let me just wake Bella up."

"Okay," Renee said, sounding absolutely dejected.

I went to the bed and gently caressed Bella's cheek. It was damp from tears she shed as she was sleep. I frowned and felt my own eyes water. "Bella," I whispered, kissing her forehead. "Wake up, love."

"No," she mumbled as she pulled the pillow over her head. I chuckled at her adorable reaction. I ran my fingers down her spine and tickled her sides lightly. "Edward Anthony Masen Cullen, if you value your balls, you will stop."

"I am quite attached to my balls, Bella. However, we have a visitor," I said, giving her a pointed glare.

"I'm assuming it's not the Easter Bunny," Bella said dryly.

"No."

"Fuck," Bella said as she rubbed her face. "Can't you just tell her that I'm gone?"

"Bella."

"Fine. Can you give us some time? I'm going to kick her ass," Bella said with an arched brow.

"I'll go back to the beach. Work on my tan," I teased.

"Edward, you're as pale as me," Bella said.

"Exactly," I winked. "Text me when you're done, okay?"

"Okay," she said. "I love you, Edward."

"I love you, too, Bella," I smiled as I kissed her forehead. She caught my chin and kissed my lips sweetly. I picked up my wallet, keys and glasses. I slid on my sandals and gave Renee a terse smile. She smirked back and fumbled with her purse. I went down to the car and went through the drive-thru of McDonald's. I got some breakfast and then went to the beach. I sat down on at a picnic table, eating my healthy meal of a McGriddle. *Tasty*. I finished my meal and tossed the trash. I slid off my glasses and took out my regular shades. I let the warm sun bathe my skin and it felt nice. Still too fucking humid, but nice.

My phone rang and I looked at the caller ID. It was Emmett. "Hello?"

"Has my sister killed my mother yet?" Emmett laughed.

"I honestly don't know. However, I did tell your mother off last night," I cringed.

"Shut the fuck up," Emmett said with a guffaw. "What did you say?"

I gave Emmett the run-down of what I said to Renee. He was shocked that I had the balls to go and speak to her like that. But, he respected me for it. He said that Renee had always been a selfish, ego-centric bitch. For as long as he could remember. He didn't even consider her to be his mom. I did tell him that

## La Cantante

I was fearful of Bella's reaction to my hasty decision to speak to Renee. He assured me that it would okay. Renee was due her comeuppance.

Emmett and I spoke for a few more minutes and then I got an alert that I had a new text. I ended the call and looked at my phone for my new message.

*You're in trouble, Cullen - B*

Crap.

*Come back, but you may want to wear a cup. - B*

*I'm on my way - E*

I got in the car and drove back to hotel. I parked the poor excuse for a vehicle and headed up to our room. I unlocked the door, slipping inside. I noticed our bag was packed and rested by the doorway. "Bella?"

"Edward," Bella said, crossing her arms over her chest.

"Don't be mad," I said with a grimace.

"Too late," she snapped. "How could you?"

"Bella, you obviously forgot how you felt last night," I said, plopping down on the couch. "You were torn up."

"But, she's my mom. She screamed at me for your actions," Bella yelled. "I get your protective nature. I do. But, why did you go behind my back?"

"Phil suggested it," I said, running my hands through my hair. "Bella, I'm sorry if I hurt your feelings. I'm sorry if I betrayed your trust. But, seeing how broken up you were..."

"Doesn't really justify your actions, Edward," she spat. "Thank you for talking to her."

"Wha...what?" I squeaked.

"She apologized. Fucking apologized," Bella breathed. "She said that she was treating me more like a servant and not like a daughter. More like a friend than her offspring."

"So...?" I asked.

"We're staying. At their home," Bella blushed. "Unfortunately there's only two bedrooms. You get the bedroom and I get the couch."

"Bella, we sleep together in an apartment. Surely, Renee can let us stay together," I whined.

"Nope. Her rules. She's really pissed at you. She was threatening to have you sleep on the lanai," Bella giggled.

"Oh, great!" I moaned, flopping back on the sofa.

"I got you back into the house and in the bedroom. I'm smaller and can handle the couch. Though I'd pay to see your 6'2" self curled up on the sofa," Bella said as she sat down next to me.

"Are you mad?"

"I was. At first. But now, I'm grateful. You did what Emmett, Charlie, Phil and I couldn't do," she said as she laid her head on my shoulder. Her tiny hand twined with mine and she took a few deep breaths. "Will the change be permanent is the question?"

"Only time will tell," I said, kissing her forehead. "I'm sorry I hurt your feelings, but I did it because I love you."

"I love you, too, Edward." Bella got up and tugged on my hand. We ended up staying in Jacksonville. For Easter. And I ended up sleeping on the couch. *Oh my back is killing me!*

**A/N: Edward told off Renee. Renee apologized to Bella. Edward was in the doghouse with Bella, but they got better. However, he's still in deep shit with Renee. Up next, end of the school year, Twilight Recording Studios, and Italy. I'm hoping to finish this up in the next few chapters (my goal is to have it be less than 100 chapters...) But I'm quite verbose, if you haven't figured that out. We'll see. Leave me love :-)**

# Transitions

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 92: Transitions

### BPOV

We survived Easter. It was tense. But we did it. Renee tried her hardest, but there was still a lot weighing on her mind. Like handling Edward. If looks could kill, he would be dead. When she talked to me, she all but told me to break it off with such a disrespectful, ungrateful boy. I nearly kicked her out of the hotel room with that one. I should have. Edward and I should have gone back to New York and gone far away from Renee.

However, hindsight is 20/20.

Renee barely spoke any words to Edward for the remainder of the Easter weekend. He spent it hanging out with Phil. Phil dragged Edward golfing on Easter Sunday to get him out of the house. When they got back, Edward's face was pink from sunburn and he was cursing a blue streak about his back that was killing him. Golfing coupled with sleeping on a lumpy loveseat does not make a happy Edward. Not that I blame him. I offered to sleep on the couch since I was smaller, but my mom demanded I stay in the guest bedroom.

She's really going to lose me. I swear to God. One more snide comment or inappropriate glare and she's toast.

*Hateful wench.*

We flew home late Sunday night and barely got into our apartment before we

## La Cantante

had to turn around and go to classes on Monday morning. Edward and I were cranky and snapping at each other. At our friends. It didn't help that I was due for my shot and Aunt Flo was on her way for a visit. Being a woman sucks sometimes. *Gah!*

After the Easter debacle, the next couple of weeks flew by. Esme and Carlisle came to visit Edward and I for dinner. Carlisle was kind enough to administer my shot. *I love knowing a doctor!* We discussed some plans about the wedding and finalized the invitation list. I wanted to remove Renee. Edward wouldn't let me. He did add Senior to the list, which kind of surprised me. Edward said he wanted to maintain a relationship with his birth father. They had talked every week since we had returned from Chicago and their relationship was growing. Not perfect, but the foundation is being built. Carlisle was surprised when Edward mentioned inviting Senior. However, he didn't question it.

Our time at Eclipse was very lucrative. Our Breaking Midnight bank account was filling up quickly. The crowds were packed into the club. We were asked to perform on two nights. One night during the week and a weekend night. Kellan begged and pleaded with us. We finally agreed. However, we made it abundantly clear that our studies were to come first. If we had to back out because of a project or assignment, then there would be no flack. Kellan readily agreed and we performed on Tuesdays and alternating Fridays and Saturdays.

Edward had decided to contact Miller's boss at Twilight in regard to his curt behavior. His boss, a woman named Adele Mariani, said that we were not the first group that mentioned that. From now on, we're to work with her. Adele said that she heard the rough cuts and loved them. She couldn't wait for us to create more. Edward explained our stipulations about recording with Twilight and she said that she wants to work with us. We're too talented to not record something.

Now we're in the second week in May. Classes are winding down. Preparations for finals are underway. End of the year concerts are scheduled. Meeting with advisors to set up classes for next year. It was insanity. I was ready to pound my head into the granite countertops in our apartment when I was looking for my classes. I already chose my music and education classes. Now I had to

## La Cantante

arrange my general education classes around that schedule. It was crazy trying to get that lined up. Edward was having similar issues. However, once we got the classes we wanted in order, we met with Eleazar. Like this semester, most of our classes are together. There were a few classes that were different, but it all worked out.

Edward and the boys were out running some errands. Angela, Alice, Rosalie and I were at the apartment, beginning to assemble the invitations for the wedding shower and for the wedding. It was a handful of people: mainly friends from Emerson, some friends of Esme's, Sue and Renee. The shower was scheduled for the weekend after we returned from Italy. We were sitting around the kitchen table, sipping some wine and talking about my upcoming nuptials.

"So, after some deliberation, we're not having a bachelorette party," Rose said, giving me a wink.

"What?" Angela and Alice squeaked.

"I don't want it," I said with a shrug.

"But, Bella. It's a rite of passage," Alice whined.

"So? I don't want it. It makes me uncomfortable. I don't want icky half naked men grinding on me," I said, wrinkling my nose.

"Back to what Bella and I discussed," Rose said pointedly. "We're going to do a lingerie shower. The weekend before the wedding. It'll be a lot of fun."

"We want to have a bachelorette party," Alice huffed.

"You can have one when *you* get married," I said, pointing my finger at her.

"Me. No bachelorette party. I can handle a lingerie shower."

"You're no fun, Bella," Angela teased.



## La Cantante

"Says the daughter of a preacher. The preacher who's marrying us," I snorted.

"It's always the preacher's kids and cop's children who are the wild ones," Angela shrugged. "Tell me you weren't a little crazy, Bella?"

"No. That would be Emmett," I giggled. "I was the sane, normal one."

"You never got trashed or anything in high school?" Alice asked.

"Nope. I smoked a cigarette once, but I nearly hacked up my lungs when I inhaled," I said. "You guys?"

"Oh my GOD, I was such a lush. I'm surprised that Esme and Carlisle didn't know. Edward too. He was quite the partyer," Alice said.

"I loved to have a good time," Angela said. "Smoking, alcohol, some pot. My dad was so involved in the church and the twins, he NEVER noticed. I was also pretty sneaky."

"I was like you, Bella," Rose said. "Sane and normal. I only loosened up in college. Well, this year. Last year, not so much."

"I never did much in high school because of Jake," I whispered. "He was always so controlling. So cruel."

"What happened?" Angela asked.

"He always got trashed. I was the sober driver. He never hit me or anything, but he was always spewing such hateful and disgusting words to me. He was drunk when he tried to attack me last New Year's Eve," I said, tears filling my eyes. "So, I never really did much. Because of him."

"Well, he's gone and you can have fun," Alice chirped, trying to lighten the mood. The girls went back to prattling on about the wedding. I excused myself to go into the bedroom. I swiped an anxiety pill and lay down on the bed. A soft knock resonated through the room and Alice popped her head in. "Are you

## La Cantante

okay, Bella?"

"I'll be fine," I said, my voice rough. "Just give me a moment."

"Do you want to call Edward?"

"No. I'll be out when my brain catches with the meds," I joked lightly. "I'm fine. Just a little down at all I missed out on as a high school student."

"Jake was an asshole. He didn't deserve you. He controlled you in order to make himself feel better. But, you have my brother. You love him, right?"

"With all my heart," I said, looking at Alice. Her face was solemn but warm. She smiled and ran her fingers across my cheek. "I can't imagine my life without him."

"Then, Jake's actions are inconsequential. He's gone and you're with Edward. He'll always care about you. Always love you," Alice said. "He'll always make sure that you're safe."

"I know," I whispered. "As I would do for him. I'm overwhelmingly happy but there's this little voice in the back of my head that keeps reminding that the other shoe is going to drop."

"It's not. I've got a..."

"Feeling. Alice, I know," I laughed. Alice wrinkled her nose and smothered me with a pillow. She hopped up and went back out into the kitchen, after sticking out her tongue. I laid on the bed for a few more minutes, letting the ativan do its job and I headed back into the kitchen. Rose gave me a hug and we started planning the lingerie shower. Much better than a bachelorette party. Definitely.

xx LC xx

"Bella, we have to go! We're running late!" Edward shouted. "It's the last class before the final. Larry is doing a huge review!"

## La Cantante

"I'm coming," I grumbled as I pulled on my sandals. "Yeesh! I'm sorry my contacts are not behaving this morning. They wouldn't get into my eyes."

"I had no problems with mine," Edward said as he fluttered his lashes. "I love my contacts. I hate the glasses."

"I love you in contacts better too. I can see your gorgeous green eyes," I said, ruffling his hair. He rolled his eyes and swiped his keys, putting his sunglasses on top of his head. I put my bag over my shoulder and we headed down to the car. Edward drove like a mad man. I was holding onto the 'oh shit' handle for dear life. I don't know why Edward had this bug up his ass to get to class on time today. I mean, I understand his trepidation for the most recent unit in theory, but goodness. Transposition and orchestration weren't that hard of concepts. Perhaps it was the piece he wrote for the final project. He wouldn't let me see it and when he was working on it, it magically disappeared.

We got to class and took our usual seats in the back. Larry breezed and he said that we were having class in the auditorium today. I furrowed my brow and looked at Edward expectantly. He smirked and shrugged. We walked into the auditorium and the full orchestra was set up on the stage. Larry told us to sit down in the seats. "Now, I bet some of you are confused." There was a din of yes's and a few 'what's going on?'

"Well, for the last day today in theory, we're going to have the orchestra perform your original compositions. This is also your final. You will be conducting it," Larry said with a wry grin. "Now, I know some of you are prepared with this and others, not so much. I want to make it abundantly clear that I'm grading you on your composition and not your conducting technique."

"So, no paper final, Larry?" asked one of the stoner jazzers.

"Nope. I made the last minute change but didn't tell you until I got the approval from the head of the department," Larry grinned. "Now, we're going in the order that I pull from this hat and the first one up is Riley Biers."

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Riley groaned and trudged up to the podium. Larry handed him a copy of his score and handed him a baton. Riley looked at him skeptically, turning to the orchestra. They shuffled their scores to get Riley's composition out. He held up his arms limply and gave his prep. The orchestra readied themselves and started playing a very disjointed composition. There was some parts that were pretty, but mostly it was crap. The next ten compositions were like that. I cringed at each one. It didn't help that the orchestra was out of tune.

I was called up next and I took a few deep breaths. Larry handed me my score and I smiled. I looked at the orchestra. "Can we tune before we play my piece?" I asked. The concert mistress gave me a relieved smile that someone remembered to ask them. She tuned the orchestra quickly and my ears finally stopped ringing. I gave them a smile and held up my arms confidently. The orchestra energy picked up and I felt powerful. *I love conducting. It's almost as good as an orgasm from Edward. Okay, not so much...but whatever.* I gave my prep and the orchestra came in confidently. They played my piece, following my cues for dynamics and articulations that were written in the piece. We finished the piece and the class applauded. With a little more gusto than for the other students, I might add. I handed Larry back his baton and he shook my hand, pulling me close to his mouth so he could whisper in my ear.

"Best one of the bunch, so far. Probably the best I've heard in all of my years of teaching and excellent job on tuning and conducting," he whispered in my ear. He pulled away and told me to sit down.

Edward hugged me tightly and kissed my lips chastely when I got back to my seat. "That was beautiful, Bella," he said with a wide grin. "I can never tire of seeing you on the podium."

"Thanks, Edward," I blushed. He laced his fingers with mine and I rested my head on his shoulder. We sat through the rest of the compositions. All of them equally as bad as the first. Even Edward was cringing and he was always so polite and positive. I guess I shouldn't get him that CD of aleatoric music. He'd hate it. That's pretty much all we listened to this morning.

## La Cantante

"We have one more composition and I know that he's been working with the orchestra on this piece for a few days. Edward Cullen," Larry said.

I looked at Edward with wide eyes. He smirked and hopped up from the chair, striding to the podium and accepting Larry's baton. Edward stood in front of the orchestra, his arms prepped for the beginning of the piece. He gave a slight indication for the orchestra to start and a lone violin came in. It was playing my lullaby, quietly, lovingly and adoringly. A few more instruments came in and the chords became more lush. More luxuriant. I felt tears prick my eyes and I held up my hands to cover my face. A new melody wove through the chords and it was a variation of my lullaby. If it was possible, even more sweet than the original. The chords morphed to match the new melody and I absolutely lost it. Tears were flowing down my cheeks freely. The orchestra grew and climaxed in a large crescendo. As abruptly as it grew louder, the lone violin, partnered with a viola played my lullaby and its variation as the song concluded. The class applauded and Edward handed Larry back his baton. Larry didn't accept it. He pushed it back into Edward's hands and shook his hand heartily. Larry pulled Edward into a hold like he did with me and he spoke to him quietly. Edward's face lit up and put his hand to his chest.

"Okay, ladies and gentlemen. This concludes your first year theory experience. I'll have your compositions graded and you can pick them up any time next week," Larry said as he dismissed us.

Edward floated back to our seats and he sat down next to me. He looked at me and gave me the most beautiful smile. "Did you like it?"

"Edward, it was the most beautiful thing I've ever heard," I whispered as I peppered his face and neck with kisses. "I heard the original lullaby and then this new variation."

"That's what I was working on. I wanted to mesh the two together," he said, a blush creeping over his cheeks. "Larry told me he wants me to expand it and premier it next fall at the band and orchestra concert. He also told me that he's going to have a music publisher friend take a look at it to see if we can market it."

## La Cantante

"Oh, Edward," I breathed as I scrambled into his lap. "That's wonderful."

"I don't know if I want to do it," he said, his jade eyes piercing through mine. "It's YOUR song. I'm probably going to expand it and rearrange it for a string quartet for the wedding, but I don't want to publish it."

"Edward, it's too good to NOT publish," I said fervently. "However, whatever you decide to do, I'll support you. 100%."

"Thank you, Bella," he said passionately, as his lips crashed down against mine. His tongue slid through my parted lips and we were having a heated little make out session until one of the orchestra musicians stumbled on stage. "Ooops."

"We probably should go to class," I snorted.

"I'd rather take you home and have my wicked way with you," he said.

"Think with this head," I said, tapping his temple. "And not this one," I smiled as I laid my hand on his inner thigh. "Let's go get edumacated or some shit like that."

"Sex or education? Sex or education?" Edward said, weighing his options.

"If you want sex, you'll have to get educated. If you want some now, it'll have to be this," I replied as I tugged on his hand. Edward groaned and let me ease him out of the chair in the auditorium. We walked to our next class and sat through the boring review. After that, we parted ways. Edward went to introduction to education and I went to biology. I had turned in my makeup assignment to Dr. Haddon a few weeks back and I was going to get it back today. Hopefully that will raise my grade. I was currently pulling a high D because of the dissection practical that he failed me on. I was nauseous at the fact that I was getting a high D. Even with doing well on the rest of the lab reports and tests, I was still getting a fucking D. If I did well on this paper, it would bring me up to a B. Hopefully.

## La Cantante

I sat next to Alice and took notes on the final. Alice was going to study with me. I was taking a modified final, at Dr. Gianetti's insistence, because of the missed work when I was in the hospital. Dr. Haddon was pissed but told Dr. Gianetti that I would have a modified final. I was cringing at the fact that the final would be more challenging than the final the rest of the students were taking. I said a silent prayer, hoping that Haddon wouldn't be a prick. *Don't hold your breath, Swan.*

At the end of the class, Haddon handed me an envelope and turned on his heel. I looked at Alice and tore it open. It was my paper. Dr. Timmerman had graded it. On the top of the paper was a bright red A and several comments congratulating me on a job well done. On the back of the paper was my changed grade in the gradebook. As I predicted, I was up to a mid-B. Alice hugged me and we darted to University Singers.

Again, we were in the auditorium. The orchestra was set up on the stage and risers were set up behind them. I skipped to Edward and held up my paper. He spun me around and kissed me. We took our spots on the risers and Eleazar led us in a brief warm up. He told us what to expect for tomorrow and what time we needed to be dressed at Brandon. We ran the Mozart *Requiem* with the orchestra. Then we did some work on the other pieces that we were performing. Several voice majors were asked to sing a solo for the concert. I was asked as well. I was hesitant, but at my entire friend's pleading, I relented and said I'd sing my honor's recital piece.

We finished our rehearsal. Edward grabbed Emmett and he went to pick up Charlie at the airport. I spent the afternoon cleaning the apartment and readying the bed for Charlie in the guest bedroom. I was working on some dinner when Edward, Emmett, Charlie and Sue came into the apartment. Charlie gave me a warm embrace, holding me to his chest. I looked at Sue and she hugged me too. "This is a surprise, Sue. Welcome to our humble abode," I joked lightly.

"Thank you for having me," Sue said with a jovial smile. "I know I wasn't expected. However, your father insisted I come and hear his talented daughter. Who am I to deny him?"

## La Cantante

"I'm glad you came, Sue," I said. "Do you want anything to eat?"

"Food!" Emmett boomed.

"Why does that NOT surprise me?" Edward said with a sardonic grin. "You are a bottomless pit. Jesus, Em."

"What? I'm a growing boy!"

"Emmett, your waistband is growing," Charlie laughed as he poked Emmett's belly. He giggled like the Pillsbury Doughboy and then gave Charlie a tight glare.

"Well, dinner will be ready in a little bit," I said. The rest of the group headed into the living room. I grabbed Edward's polo shirt and handed him some appetizers to share with my family. Edward smiled and kissed me lightly, taking the food into the family room. I finished dinner and set up a small buffet on the counter. We ate in the family room, unable to fit at the kitchen table. Charlie and Sue asked Edward and I about the wedding. We told them the most recent details. We also gave them a copy of the engagement photos that I had ordered for them.

Charlie and Sue went into the office and settled into bed. They were tired and needed sleep. A long day's travel will do that to a person. Emmett left after Charlie and Sue headed into bed. Edward and I cleaned up the kitchen and went to sleep early as well. We had a big day tomorrow with the concert. The last concert of the year. It just seemed like yesterday that we were starting the school year. Now, finals are around the corner. Italy is quickly approaching. And most importantly, our wedding is only a few months away. *I couldn't wait.*

**A/N: Okay, a transition chapter. Not really happy with it. Then again, I'm battling some writer's block with this story. It's frustrating me. I have it planned. I do. I just need to figure out how to end it. Anyhow, up next will be the end of the year concert and Italy. After that, wedding and the ending?**



# End of the School Year

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 93: End of the School Year

### EPOV

After the final concert of the year for University Singers, we all went out to dinner. Charlie and Sue got along famously with Carlisle and Esme. Apparently Carlisle and Charlie have the same enjoyment of fishing. I never knew Carlisle like to fish. I furrowed my brow at this concept. Carlisle chuckled telling me that he and Senior did when they were younger. I had even harder time wrapping my head around that. Senior was so refined. So not the fisherman. *You learn something new every day.*

Carlisle invited Charlie to go fishing anytime. They tentatively set up some time during the week of our wedding. Carlisle said that all of the boys were going to do it. Jasper, Emmett, and me.

*Ewwwwwwwwww! I hate fishing.*

I smiled tightly and laced my fingers with Bella's, idly tracing her engagement ring on her finger. Bella promised that she would teach me how to fish.

*Now, that's just wrong. So wrong. My fiancée is teaching me how to fish.*

We drove back to the apartment. Sue and Charlie were going to stay with my parents. They were closer to the airport and Carlisle offered to drive them. I was so happy that our families got along so well. Though, I was wondering how they would react to Renee. Hell, I had a hard time with her. I mean that

## La Cantante

woman just grated on my nerves. Her rude comments and selfish behavior toward Bella was uncalled for. I'm pretty easygoing. It takes a lot to get me pissed off. And Renee did every single thing to piss me off. She treated Bella disrespectfully and had no concern for her feelings. It's a load of crap. As much as Bella should have a relationship with her mom, I won't be sad if things disintegrate. Bella deserves the right to be happy and loved. She appears to get that from Charlie and Sue.

"Oh my God!" Bella bellowed as she looked at her phone. She had removed her University Singers dress and was wearing one of my high school t-shirts. *She's so hot when she wears my clothes. Especially clothes that have my name emblazoned on her chest.*

"What?" I asked.

"Charlie texted me."

"And that's weird why?" I retorted, arching my brow. Bella handed me her phone.

*This house is unfuckingbelievable. We can fit our entire house in the goddamned foyer. Did I do this right? Texting, I mean- Charlie*

"I see that he's impressed with the house," I snickered.

"He's probably having a heart attack. You've seen my house. We can fit the entire thing in your foyer," she said, giving me a sarcastic smirk. She reached for her phone and tapped out a response.

"Speaking of houses," I said, a blush covering my cheeks.

"We're not getting a house," Bella said flatly.

"Listen, though," I said, dragging her to the bed. I watched her long graceful legs as they walked with me. *God, she's so fucking exquisite. Mine.* "I think it would be beneficial to get a house. I mean, the apartment is nice. Don't get me

## La Cantante

wrong. But, we're going to be married in less than three months. I would love to take my wife home to our home. Our house."

"Edward, we still have another six months on the rent on this place," Bella said.

"Don't you want to have a house?" I asked, jutting out my bottom lip.

"Of course I want a house. However, we're still in school. We should still be living in the dorms," Bella said, offering me a weak argument.

"But we're not. We can get a house close to campus," I wheedled as I pinned her body with my hips. "A whole new place to christen."

"We'd need to get another car," Bella said.

"No big deal," I said, tracing my nose along her jaw. *I've won. We're getting a house.* "I'll get it for you for your wedding present."

"Edward, most people get dishes for wedding presents. Not cars," she said, tugging on my hair forcing me to look in her eyes.

"I'm not 'most people,'" I said with a devilish grin on my face. "And in a few short months, neither will you."

"You know how I feel about you spending money unnecessarily," Bella said.

"Real estate is a solid investment," I said, rolling onto my side. "Even in this economy. I can put down a nice down payment or even purchase it outright."

"But..."

"No, buts. I want nothing but the best for my Bella," I said, snaking my arm around her waist and slowly lifting her (my) shirt. My fingers danced along her spine and I gave her my signature crooked smirk.

## La Cantante

"Don't think that your panty dropping smile is going get me to relent so easily," Bella said forcefully.

"Panty-dropping smile?"

"Yep," Bella giggled.

"Can we get a house?"

"Edward Anthony Masen Cullen!"

"Come on! Please?" I begged.

"No."

"Bella!" I whined. "Please? Please with an orgasm on top?"

"You are relentless," Bella laughed as she straddled my waist. "I'm just hesitant to get a house. I mean, do you want to stay near Emerson for the rest of your life?"

"It doesn't matter where we go. We could always rent out the house if we move," I said. "I wouldn't sell it."

"But..."

"Isabella Marie Swan soon-to-be Cullen," I said arching my brow. "It would be awesome if we had a house. Please let me get one for you. For us. Please? Pretty please?"

"Let me think about it," Bella said with a tone of finality in her voice. "Now, make love to me."

"Yes, Mrs. Cullen," I smirked.

"God, I LOVE THAT!" she swooned.

## La Cantante

*Hmmmm...me too.*

xx LC xx

Sunday was our performance for Emerson Express. I was wearing my tuxedo. Bella had her hair curled within an inch of her life. Alice had arrived early this morning with makeup and hair implements in tow. Bella gave me a look of absolute terror. It reminded me of the first night I met her. I snorted and got dressed in the spare bedroom. An hour later, Bella was the show choir queen in her dress and professionally done makeup. We met at Brandon and those of us who had cars, loaded them up with our equipment. Then we drove to the band shell in the town.

We set up the stage with ease and did a brief sound check. As a group, we headed into the basement of the band shell to get a brief warm up and run through a few tough spots. Felix bounced on his toes and Demetri tried to reign him in. It wasn't happening. We all got close to each other and said a quick prayer. We headed up to the stage and we readied ourselves for the final performance of the year for Emerson Express.

It was bittersweet. Bella was not going to do it next year. She wanted to experience the Women's Chorale. Since she was able to fit it into her schedule, she decided to do that. I was going to miss her as a partner. She made the rehearsals a lot of fun. I didn't want to do Emerson Express, but I didn't have the luxury to join another group. It was University Singers and Express for me. It would be nice to have a men's choral group. Perhaps I'll discuss it with Eleazar while we're on our trip to Italy.

Our final show for Emerson Express was well received. We performed all of our music. Bella and I never did get a chance to do 'Fever.' With all that happened this semester, it never panned out. Felix said he would consider it for next year. However, I wouldn't want to do it with anyone but Bella.

Felix told us that our tuxedos and dresses needed to be dry cleaned and returned before we left school. As soon as we were done, Bella and I changed and brought our stuff to the dry cleaners around the corner from the apartment.

## La Cantante

I noticed Bella eyeballing a house guide pamphlet. I did a mental fist pump at her blatant ogling of the sleek brochure. I eagerly accepted the claim slip from the nice Asian woman who owned the shop and we headed to the apartment.

Once we got back to our place, Bella wanted to start packing for our trip to Italy. We were leaving on Wednesday after our last final exam with the group. It was insane that we were going to Italy. I couldn't wait. Neither could Bella. She had purchased a book on Italian sites and poured over it for days. I took a look at it as well. There were some places that I hoped we would go to. However, we were only going to be there for ten days.

"Edward?"

"Yes, beautiful?" I replied. I was sitting and studying for my educational psychology final. Bella was taking a break.

"Do you think we can get a nice camera before we go to Italy?" she asked sheepishly.

"Of course," I said, giving her a smile as I looked over the rims of my glasses. "We can go after my jury tomorrow."

"Thank goodness that I don't have to do juries this quarter. One of the benefits of being in the honors recital," Bella gushed.

"Um, yeah. You suck," I said, wrinkling my nose.

"Hey, I'm still playing for you, so shut it," Bella retorted. "I'm still nervous. What if I fuck up?"

"You won't," I said. "I have complete confidence in you. I even picked a song with no sharps."

"Edward, sharps don't bother me. It's an out of tune piano that drives me nuts," Bella cringed. "So, after your jury, we'll get a camera."

## La Cantante

"Yeah," I smiled. "I love you, beautiful."

"I love you, too."

*God, we're so nauseating.*

xx LC xx

It was nice. We didn't have to get up at the asscrack of dawn for theory. Thank you so much, Larry, for canceling the final. It gave Bella and I a chance to sleep in. We still had finals for educational psychology, music literature and sociology. Bella had an additional final for biology. I only had the final curriculum project for intro to education. The only final scheduled for today was biology for Bella. I had my vocal jury and then I was done for today. Bella's biology final was at ten in the morning. As soon as she was done, she was going to meet me for a brief rehearsal for my vocal jury piece at Brandon.

We got up and I showered first. Bella didn't have to contend with juries and so she just lazed around the apartment as I got dressed. I could tell she was panicking about her biology final. Her hair was pulled into a messy knot at the nape of her neck and she was wearing her glasses. I got dressed in a pair of black dress pants, red shirt and black tie. I ran my fingers through my hair and popped in contact lenses. I was so happy when I got them. I never realized how blind I was. I was so reliant on my glasses that I was dumbfounded. How had I not realized it? Oh well.

"You ready, my love?" I asked as I spray on some cologne.

"Sure," Bella said distractedly. "Let me just put on some more appropriate clothing." She darted past me and slipped on a black dress and pair of ballet flats. Her hair was still in a messy knot and she hadn't bothered to put on much makeup. Not that she needed it. "Yay, last day of biology. No more Haddon!"

"He's a douche," I said, lacing my fingers with hers and tossing her messenger bag over my body. In it held her biology book and my music for my jury. "You won't have to deal with him after today."

## La Cantante

"Thank GOD!" Bella said. "Biology and science just don't mesh with my head. I'm an artist. This whole logical, analytical shit is too much."

"Now you know my pain," I said with a smirk. "Try having to major in it and not having the passion or drive to do so."

"That just sucks, Edward. I don't know how you did it for a year," Bella said, furrowing her brow.

"I'm so grateful that Carlisle agreed in letting me switch my majors. He didn't want me to be music, but thankfully we compromised on music education," I said, tucking a wayward hair back into her bun.

We got into the car and I drove Bella to the science building. I went to The Cage and got some food. Afterward, I headed into my practice room to do some last minute rehearsing before I did my vocal jury. Honestly, my voice was taxed. It felt like it was on fire. I just marked through the piece I had chosen with my voice teacher and spent the rest of the time rearranging Bella's song that I had written for my final in theory.

I heard a quiet knock at my door. I got up and opened it. Bella was standing outside of the door, looking a little worse for wear. "What's wrong?" I asked, trying to hide the panic in my voice.

"The final for biology was brutal. At least for me," Bella said, her lower lip trembling. "The questions were insanely hard and I know I completely bombed it. I swear that Haddon has it out for me."

"Did you talk to Alice? How was her final?" I asked.

"She told me what was on hers and the questions were much easier," Bella wailed. "I'm finally pulling a B in there and if I bomb this, I'll drop again. I can't have any grades below a B to maintain my scholarship."

"After my jury, we can go to Dr. Gianetti's office and tell him," I said. Bella nodded and fell into my arms, crying softly. "Shhhh, it's okay, love. We'll



## La Cantante

figure this out." I held her for a few moments longer. Unfortunately we needed to head to my jury. I intertwined my fingers with Bella's and we walked to the car. I drove us to the performance space and waited outside of the room. I nibbled on my fingernails until I was called in. Bella sat down at the piano and spread out the music on the stand. I stood in the crook of the piano. Bella gave me a wink and readied her hands.

"Whenever you're ready, Mr. Cullen," my voice teacher, Paul, said. I took a deep breath and looked over at Bella, giving her a slight nod. She smiled and played the introduction to my piece. As I predicted, she did perfectly. Me, not so much. I fumbled over a few words, but kept going. Hopefully no one noticed. Though, it's doubtful. At the end of my song, I bowed slightly and acknowledged Bella as my accompanist. "Excellent job, Mr. Cullen. I look forward to working with you again next year. Keep up the good work."

"Thank you, Paul," I said with a grin. "Have a good summer everyone."

"You as well, Mr. Cullen. Ms. Swan. Enjoy Italy," Paul smiled.

"We will," Bella said, excitement evident in her voice. Bella and I headed out of the room and into the car. I drove us to the administrative building and parked in the lot. "I'm happy that you did well on your jury. But, I'm not happy about meeting with Dr. Gianetti again."

"Obviously Haddon has some sort of grudge against you. You need to let Dr. Gianetti know," I said. Bella nodded and we headed up to the office. We had to wait a little bit before we were ushered into Dr. Gianetti's office.

"Bella, Edward, I'm assuming things are not good since you're in here," Dr. Gianetti said with a frown.

"I took my biology final," Bella said glumly.

"And?"

## La Cantante

"It was a modified final due to the fact that I couldn't be assessed on the practical and dissection portion of the class. However, the test was insanely difficult. It asked about the concepts we covered in class, but at a depth we never discussed. The most difficult portion was on genetics. I couldn't make heads or tails of it. It's like Haddon has it out for me," Bella said, her voice wavering.

"Hold on," Dr. Gianetti said as he picked up his phone. He dialed a few numbers and he spoke curtly to Dr. Haddon. Within fifteen minutes, Dr. Haddon was in Dr. Gianetti's office, holding two tests.

"Here are the requested tests," Haddon snapped. "All of the concepts that were on Ms. Swan's exam were covered in class."

"Dr. Haddon, this is not introductory biology curriculum. Some of the questions are related to advanced genetics and biochemistry. The concepts were introduced in your class, but what you're asking in the questions are not."

"It was in the text," Haddon said.

"No, it wasn't," Bella said quietly. She took out her biology text book and flipped the pages to the genetics chapter. She placed it in front of Dr. Gianetti. He read the text quickly and concurred with Bella.

"Dr. Haddon, please go up to Dr. Marcus Volturi's office," Dr. Gianetti said brusquely. "We'll deal with you in a moment."

"What?" Haddon roared.

"You've crossed the line. Based on your behavior, your tenure is at stake. As far as Ms. Swan is concerned, she will get the grade that she had going into the final as her final grade for the class. Go to Dr. Volturi's office unless you want to be fired in front of two students," Dr. Gianetti growled.

"Fuck this. I'm done. I quit!" Haddon screamed as he stomped out of the office.

## La Cantante

"I'm so sorry, Bella," Dr. Gianetti said with a frown.

"Did you mean it about my grade?" Bella asked quietly. "I'll get what I had before the final as my final grade."

"Yes. As will the rest of your classmates. I'm assuming that Dr. Haddon will not be grading any more finals for Emerson."

"I'm sorry to cause all this trouble," Bella replied. "It was never my intention..."

"You do not need to apologize. You were in a horrendous car accident and you should not be penalized because of that fact. Go home. Study for the rest of your exams and I hope you enjoy your summer. You too, Edward," Dr. Gianetti said kindly. Bella smiled tightly and got up from her seat. I wrapped my arm around her waist and we left Dr. Gianetti's office.

"Bella?"

"Hmmm?" Bella responded sadly.

"What's wrong, love? Are you upset about Haddon?"

"Yeah. I can't believe him. I never did anything. Honestly. I never wanted him to be fired or for him to quit," Bella said. "But, apparently he had other ideas. He just couldn't look past the fact that I wouldn't let this go. It was unfair the way he treated me."

"It wasn't just you, Bella. Haddon has always been a hardnosed prick. We fought constantly when he was my advisor," I said. "It was his way or the highway. When I said that I was taking theory for this year, he nearly had a coronary. 'Why would a doctor need to take music theory? You're pre-med, not music,' he said. He sounded so much like Carlisle. I almost wanted to switch advisors after that comment. But I couldn't. All pre-med majors were assigned to him. No choice." We climbed onto the elevator and rode down to the main level.

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"Kind of like how all music education majors are assigned to Eleazar," Bella said.

"Exactly. Come on, let's buy us a camera," I said with a wink. "Kind of like a 'Fuck off, Haddon' present."

"You are too much, Cullen," Bella giggled.

"But you love me," I said, fluttering my eyes.

"Indeed I do," Bella giggled as she kissed my lips. She reached into my pants pocket and grabbed the car keys.

"Hey!"

Bella let out a laugh and ran out to the car. I jogged behind her and she slid into the driver's seat. I rolled my eyes and got into the passenger side.

*Sneaky girl.*

xx LC xx

The rest of our finals went by uneventfully. We got our camera. I splurged a bit and got a digital SLR camera. Bella arched a brow but didn't fight it. I also got a couple of lenses. And a bag. And a special flash. I spent a shitload of money on the damn camera, but I loved it.

Bella had skillfully packed both of our bags for our trip. We were only allowed one bag for each student. Bella jam packed both of suitcases and was finally happy with the result. The only downfall of our trip to Italy was the rooming situation. Felix was pretty open about having couples staying together. Eleazar was not. I wanted to have Bella as my roommate while we were on this trip, but Eleazar made it abundantly clear that no male/female roommate situations would occur. I tried to argue my point saying that Bella and I were engaged to be married. However, Eleazar said we were not married yet and we had to uphold the college's expectations and represent Emerson. I groaned inwardly

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and dealt with the fact that I was rooming with Jasper and Tyler. Bella was staying with Alice and Rose.

It was Wednesday morning. Bella and I had our educational psychology final at eight and then we had to head to Brandon. We were taking a big coach bus to New York City. Our flight was out of La Guardia. I lugged the suitcases to the car and we headed to Facinelli for our final. It was pretty cut and dry. Afterward, I dropped off Bella with the luggage at Brandon. Emmett met up with me and followed me back to the apartment so I could park my car at the parking garage. He drove me back to Brandon. "Have fun in Italy, man. I wish I was going with you. I would give my left nut to see all of that with Rosie," Emmett said gloomily.

"Thanks, Em. We'll take a ton of pictures. And you'll get a chance to go. I promise you," I said with a wink.

"Thanks, Eddie. I'll see you guys when you get back," Emmett said with a wistful smile. I clapped him on the shoulder and picked up my camera bag from the bed of the truck. I gave Emmett a wave and he drove away to Rathburn. He was staying there over the summer while he did a summer internship. I met up with Jasper, Rose, Alice and Bella on the steps of Brandon. Bella was fumbling with her iPod as she was talking to Tyler.

"You ready to head to Italy?" I said, rubbing my hands together.

"Fuck yeah!" Jasper said, giving me a fist bump. "I can't wait."

"Bella tells me that you got some huge new camera," Rose said with a quirked eyebrow.

"Yep. It's in my camera bag," I said as I patted the leather satchel slung over my shoulder. "It's pretty sweet."

"You better share the pictures, Cullen," Tyler said. I gave a salute and whipped out the camera, taking a few shots. There were candids and I loved how they turned out. *Hmmm...I think I found a new hobby.* I took some more pictures of

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Bella by herself. She was laughing so freely and looked like an angel. The last picture I took before Eleazar loaded us onto the bus almost looked like Bella was singing. Her mouth was opened and she had her arms raised. *Il mio cantante. L'amore della mia vita. Sempre.*

**A/N: They finished the school year! YAY! Haddon quit! WOO HOO! They're heading to Italy! I WANT TO GO! Anyhow, obviously up next is the Italy trip. The update for that may take awhile as I want to get the research for that done well. There will be lemons. Gelato type lemons. Leave me love, please! Xoxox!**

# Italy

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 94: Italy

### BPOV

#### Venice

We were on our way to Italy. ITALY! I couldn't believe it! The coach buses dropped us off at the international terminal at La Guardia. We were waiting by our gate for our flight to Venice. Edward and I were curled up next to each other, reading the book I had gotten about sites in Italy. Our trip was going to be jam packed with Italian culture, performances and bonding as a choir. The only bummer was Edward and I couldn't room together. Felix was pretty open minded about rooming situations. Since he was very gay. His entire relationship was a taboo. Eleazar was not as flexible. Edward and I tried to get him to let us stay together, since we were *engaged*. But, he wouldn't waver. Damn it.

"What are you looking forward to, beautiful?" Edward asked as he nuzzled my neck.

"Just being able to share this experience with you, Edward," I said as a blush covered my cheeks.

"Awwwww...you two are so adorable," Rose said as she tossed a Twizzler at us. Edward caught it and stuffed it in his mouth. "Nauseating is more like it."

"You're just jealous because Emmett isn't here, Rose," Alice said sagely as she

read a fashion magazine.

"Now, do you blame me? You have Jasper. Edward has Bella. My boyfriend is stuck at Emerson," Rose grumbled. "I'm stuck with Tyler and Ben."

"Hey! Be nice, Rosalie," Tyler snickered. "We'll have fun."

"Tyler, no offense. You're not my Emmett. Sorry," Rose said as she scrunched her nose. Tyler stuck out his tongue and turned back to his book. Rose giggled and put in her ear buds for her iPod. We sat for a little while longer until our flight was called. Essentially, the flight was all of us from University Singers. The only seats that were not slated for us were in first class. We got onto the huge airplane and settled in for the long flight to Venice. Edward took out his laptop and we watched a movie on it after we took off.

I ended up nodding off for the rest of the flight and didn't wake up until we were on our final approach to Venice. The flight landed and we headed through the Venice International Airport and into our new coach bus. The bus drove us to our hotel, The Hotel Carlton and Grand Canal. It was right on the canals of Venice. It was beautiful and opulent. I didn't even want to think about how much this was costing the school. We were staying in hotels for the entire trip. No hostels. No host families. Just hotels. And apparently, expensive hotels. Eleazar checked us into the hotel and distributed keys. I was rooming with Alice and Rose. However, I wanted to stay with Edward so badly.

We lugged our suitcases up to our room. Which happened to be right across the hall from Edward, Tyler and Jasper. After we put our suitcases into our room, the guys came across the hall. "So, what do you all want to do? Tonight is pretty much on our own," Jasper said.

"Let's get some gelato," Rose said as she bounced on her toes. "I'm dying for some pistachio gelato."

"How about some dinner and gelato for dessert?" Edward chuckled.

"Oh, fine," Rose giggled.



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We grabbed our bags, passports and keys as we headed out to the streets of Venice. We got some pizza from a café. It was delicious. Better than any pizza I'd had at home. Then we wandered to La Boutique del Gelato. We all got our gelato and shared it. Rose was hesitant to give up some of her pistachio gelato, but she did. We then wandered through the streets, snapping photos and having fun. As we were walking, Edward spoke with one of the gondoliers. They were packing up for the evening. However, Edward asked when they were open the next day. In broken English, they said that boat tours start at nine in the morning. We had a performance Hotel Gabrielli at four in the afternoon. We arranged for a gondola ride for around ten in the morning on the iconic waterways of Venice.

After our conversation with the gondoliers, we headed back to our hotel. Edward hung out in our room, while Alice went into Jasper's room. Tyler meandered to Ben's room while Rose stayed in our room. She was used to our antics. Hell, she encouraged it. Though, we didn't do anything with Rose in the room. That would have been weird.

Edward actually ended up zonking out on my bed. Rose said that she didn't see the 6'2" bronze haired god in my bed. He was invisible. *Our secret was safe with her.* I curled up next to Edward after I changed into my pajamas. Edward wrapped his arms around my waist and we fell into a deep sleep.

xx LC xx

Rose's alarm woke us up around eight in the morning. She smacked Edward on the ass, hissing at him to leave our room before we got into trouble. Edward looked around with this adorable look of confusion. Then I saw his eyes. I recognized that too well. He fell asleep with his contacts in and they were a nasty red. I pushed him out of the bed and he stumbled across the hall. However, he opened the door and immediately closed it.

"What's wrong, Edward?" Rose asked.

"I didn't need to see that," he squeaked. "I need to bleach my brain."

## La Cantante

"Alice and Jasper?" Rose asked sympathetically.

"My eyes. I need to burn my eyes. I didn't need to see my sister riding the hick," Edward moaned as he ran back over to me. "Hold me, Bella. Make me forget." I hugged him as he whimpered quietly. "I'm scarred for life."

"I'm sorry, handsome," I cooed. We then heard Alice and Jasper's cries of exultation as they reached their climax. *I think I threw up in my mouth a little bit.* "Now, I need the brain bleach." Edward nodded against my neck and held me closer.

"Can I get a double?" Rose said as she buried her head in her hands. "I want Emmett."

"I want to be in my own room with Bella," Edward moaned. "This sucks."

"Tell me about it," I grumbled. Alice stumbled out of her room, locked in an embrace with Jasper. He was shirtless and wearing a pair of shorts. Edward growled lightly and I put a soothing arm on his chest. "Relax, Edward."

"I'm fine," Edward said tersely. "I will not kill a Texan today."

"Can I kill one?" Rose snickered.

"Have at it, Rose," Edward said as he chuckled darkly. Rose stomped across the hall and dragged Alice from Jasper's arms. He started to protest, but Rose shoved him into the room. He fell over a suitcase and flipped head over heels. Jasper cursed a blue streak and we all fell over in a fit of laughter. All of us except Alice and Jasper. They just glowered at us. "Oh, it was funny, Pixie."

"If there is one hair on his perfect blond head that is injured, Rosalie Lillian Hale..." Alice warned.

"You'll what?" Rose asked, putting her arms on her hips, towering over Alice.

"I'll cut up your designer dresses," Alice sneered.

"You wouldn't," Rose snarled.

"Don't tempt me, Hale," she said.

"Okay, let's not threaten each other clothes or significant others. Edward, go shower and change and put on your glasses," I said.

"But, I don't wanna," Edward whined. I shot him a look, arching my brow. He pouted and skulked into his room, smacking Jasper on his belly. Alice growled at her brother and started to go across the room. Rose and I stopped her and threw her into the bathroom.

"Be ready in a half hour," I said to Edward before he shut the door. He nodded and winked. Rose, Alice and I figured out our shower schedule and we hoped to it. I went first and I spent my time after I dressed checking out sites we could see before our performance. We were taking a gondola ride at ten, but everything else was up in the air after that. On the itinerary, we were going to Murano tomorrow as we left Venice for Pisa. I was certain that Alice and Rose wanted to shop. I could honestly care less about the shopping. It was more about the experience than the shopping for me. However, I'm not a normal girl. I hate shopping. *Yes, I'm weird. We know this.*

As I was jotting down a few ideas in my journal that I got for this trip, Edward poked his head in. His hair was wet and he had on a pair of olive green cargo shorts and black t-shirt. Over the top was a black button down that was left undone with the sleeves rolled up. He had his camera bag slung over his shoulder and a pair sneakers on his feet. *God, he's so fucking handsome. I really want to jump his bones.*

Now is not the time to think about having sex with your fiancé. When you can't have any sexual contact with him for ten days. *Gah!*

"Bella!"

"Huh?"

## La Cantante

"You were totally not here," Edward chuckled. "Sleeping with your eyes open?"

"Day dreaming about all of the naughty things I can't do to you," I scowled. "I'm so pissed that we can't stay together."

"I know, beautiful," Edward sighed as he kissed my lips chastely. "We had a little bonus last night."

"We spooned! Yay! I'd rather be boned," I grumbled.

"I'd rather be boning," Edward snickered. "Soon, baby. We'll have to come up with some creative rooming situations. Alice and Jasper got the room to themselves last night. Perhaps tonight, it'll be our turn. And then..."

"We can bone?"

"God, I've created a monster," Edward said as he pulled into an embrace.

"Do I need to bleach my brain because of you two?" Rose asked as she swept her hair into a twist.

"No," Edward said. "Unlike Pixie and Hick, we have some sense of decorum. We know not to fuck in the middle of an occupied room."

"We left the do not disturb sign on," Alice chirped as she ran her fingers through her hair.

"That's for housekeeping, Alice," Edward sighed. "It's not like I can read your mind when you want to have sex with your boyfriend."

"How about this, if we're having sex, we'll leave this," Alice said as she held up a paisley scarf, "on the door. Same for you and Bella, okay?"

"Fine," Edward said. We all met in our room and headed down to the lobby. Edward picked up a map and we walked to the canal where we had arranged to

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meet up with the gondoliers. Edward was snapping photos and he looked so adorable doing so. We met up with two gondoliers and loaded onto the boats. Rose, Alice and Jasper were on one boat. Edward, Ben, Tyler and I were on the other. We floated along the canals of Venice. Our gondolier, Gio, described and explained its history. Then he sang. Very clichéd and iconic, but perfect. Tyler swiped the camera from Edward and he snapped pictures of Edward and I in the gondola. We passed under the Ponte di Rialto. After an hour, we were docked and we paid Gio for our trip.

We decided to go to Piazza San Marco. We strolled around the Piazza and decided to go to the Torre dell'Orologio and Museo Correr. We also went into the Basilica di San Marco. Afterward, we got some lunch and did some shopping in the high end shops in the Piazza San Marco. Alice and Rose were like kids in a candy store, running from shop to shop. You'd figure that they'd never been shopping before with their excitement. Edward tried to get me to purchase some clothes from Gucci. There were several items that caught my eye, but I didn't need them.

We headed back to the hotel so we could change for our performance at the Hotel Gabrielli. I pulled my hair up into a half up-do. I threw on my dress for our performance along with our jewelry. Rose and Alice touched up their makeup and we met up with the rest of University Singers in the lobby. Edward looked delicious in his tuxedo, but he always does.

We loaded up on the two buses and drove to the Hotel Gabrielli. Eleazar explained that we were singing for a banquet of Italian business owners. We were going to be singing our secular music and few recognizable pieces for the banquet. We were met by the hotel manager and led into a small ballroom for our warm up. We stood in mixed formation and touched on a few spots that were troublesome. Eleazar said that he was excited for our first performance in Italy and he went to check if they were ready for us. We all chattered until Eleazar motioned for us to follow him. We held our folders and walked into the banquet hall, standing on the rickety risers on the raised platform.

Eleazar introduced us, in Italian and he said that we were performing a small portion of our concert for them this evening. I think. I forgot all of the Italian

## La Cantante

that I learned from my first semester. About halfway through the concert, Eleazar spoke and said that we were doing two pieces that were going to be conducted by students. *Shit. I was definitely not expecting this.* He introduced Edward first and we sang "Listen to the Angels Shouting." Edward was flustered, but he didn't let it show. However, he gave me a slightly panicked look before he went onto the podium. We performed the piece and Edward gave a slight bow before indicating to the choir. Eleazar introduced Edward in Italian and explained his major. Eleazar also explained his little experiment with Edward and I. The business owners chuckled when Eleazar said that this was not rehearsed. They gave Edward another round of applause and he headed back to his spot behind me on the risers.

I was introduced next and I managed to get to the front of the risers and onto the podium without stumbling. Edward and Tyler stepped up and grinned. I gave my prep to Carmen and we began "River in Judea." We got through the song and I bowed at the conclusion. I indicated to Edward and Tyler, the soloists and gave Edward a wink. Eleazar shook my hand.

We finished our concert and filed off the stage. The hotel manager thanked Eleazar after we got into our ballroom. Eleazar said we did well and that we were having dinner at the hotel. We walked into a large restaurant and ate a filling meal of Italian delicacies that were prepared by the hotel staff. We loaded onto the bus and drove back to our hotel, which was the sister hotel to Hotel Gabrielli. We couldn't stay there because of the convention we sang at. So, we were housed at our current hotel.

Alice and Jasper graciously allowed Edward and I to use the boy's room for some canoodling. I wanted Edward. But then again, when do I not want Edward. I mean, he's hot. However, I felt strangely uncomfortable kicking the guys out of their room just to have sex with my fiancé. After I changed into some pajamas, I went over to his room. Edward kissed me deeply once I arrived, but noticed I wasn't into it. "What's wrong, Bella?" Edward asked.

"I feel guilty," I blushed.

"About?"

## La Cantante

"About sex...the sex we're supposed to be having," I sighed.

"Bella, we don't have to make love. I would like to just hold you and sleep with you," Edward said as he caressed my cheek. "If we make love, SWEET. If not, I'm okay with just keeping you in my arms." I wrapped my arms around Edward's waist and nodded against his bare chest. He bent down and picked me, bridal style. "No moping, Bella. Enjoy our time alone. Since it'll be rare."

Edward carried me to the made bed in the room. The other bed looked all rumpled. "Is that...?"

"The bed of infamy? Yes. I refuse to even..." he shuddered. "I still need brain bleach."

"Sorry, Edward," I snorted. He shrugged and put me onto the bed. He turned off the lights and set his alarm. He pulled off his shorts and crawled in the sheets in his boxers. I curled up, placing my head over his heart. Edward's hand idly traced on my back. "You did really well tonight, handsome."

"I thought I was going to shit my pants. We haven't rehearsed the piece much and I was a wreck. Went way too fast," Edward said. His fingers dipped under my camisole and they danced along my spine. I shivered slightly. "Cold?"

"No," I said, my tone breathy.

"Hmmm," Edward cooed. I could imagine his face erupting in his crooked smirk. His fingers moved further up my back, dragging my camisole up with it. Feeling bold, I ran my own fingers along his hips. I traced the waistband of his boxers and he hissed lightly. "You are such a tease."

"Like you're not?" I giggled at my camisole that was almost off my body.

Edward laughed and he positioned me over his hips. *Someone's hard.* "I'd rather that be off," Edward said as he ran his fingers over my breasts. My nipples were at full attention and Edward's eyes were trained on them.

## La Cantante

"What are you going to do about it, Cullen?" I pressed.

"Let me think," Edward mused as he tapped his mouth. He reached for my cami and pulled it over my head. His lips were attached to my breast and his tongue was swirling around the taut nipple. I moaned and threw my head back. "We need to be quiet, love. Don't want to get caught."

"Right," I said as I pushed him back onto the pillows. My lips crushed against his and our tongues danced languidly with each other. Edward's large hands moved to my ass and he pulled me flush to his growing erection. I moved away, scooting back on Edward's legs. I pulled his boxers off his legs and ran my tongue along his hip. On his tattoo. He groaned and bucked his hips. "You need to be quiet, love."

"You are a vixen," he breathed. "I need you."

"What do you want?"

Edward flipped so he was hovering over me. He ripped my sleep shorts and panties off. They were still intact, but now on the floor. He spread my legs. He ran his fingers along my slit, coating them in my wetness. "Fuck, Bella," he moaned as he brought his fingers to his mouth. His emerald eyes caught mine as he moved to my entrance with his cock. He eased into my slick folds, panting as he did. "I can never get over how tight you are, Bella. Perfect."

"I was made for you, Edward," I said as I shifted my hips. Edward smirked as he began sliding in and out of my body. "I love you."

"I love you so much, beautiful," he whispered as he brushed his lips against mine. He kissed down my neck, pulling my earlobe into his teeth. "God, I'm not going to last long. It's been far too..."

"I know, Edward," I said as I fisted his soft hair. "Harder, baby."

"Harder?" he asked. "Your wish is my command. Hold onto the bed frame." I reached behind me and grabbed onto the metal bed frame as Edward sat back.



## La Cantante

He angled my body so he could pound deeper into my heat. His fingers moved to my clit and he worked it fiercely as he glided in and out. "Shit, I'm close, Bella. Come for me, beautiful. I need to feel you come."

I rocked against him, moving in tandem with his hips. My muscles were fluttering and I was seeing stars. "Edward," I moaned as I looked up at him. "Fuck." Edward leaned forward, putting his hands next to my head and slammed into me. His cock penetrating every part of me. Filling me to the hilt. His gaze met mine and he stared at me as we made love. My breathing was erratic and I could feel myself come undone. I turned my head and screamed into a pillow as I clamped down around his cock.

Edward bit back a scream of his own as he spilled into me. His slick body fell on top of mine and we lay together, connected in the most intimate of ways as we calmed our breathing. After a few moments, Edward pulled out and put on his boxers. "Still feel guilty?"

"Oh, GOD!" I groaned as I buried my face into his chest. Edward chuckled as he pulled the comforter over our bodies and I tried to forget what we just did. *As good as it felt, we cannot do that again. It's just wrong.*

## Pisa

Edward's alarm went off and he groaned as he shut it off. I pulled the covers over my head. "Bella, you need to get up, love. You're still, um, naked. I'm certain that Jasper and Tyler don't want to see you naked. Well, they probably would, but I'd have to kick their asses. You're my fiancée," Edward said.

"Can you hand me my clothes?" I asked. Edward tossed me my camisole and shorts. I got dressed and went to the bathroom. I looked out in the hallway and darted across after a hasty kiss with Edward. I got into my own room and hopped into the shower. After packing our bags, we headed down to the lobby and loaded up the coach buses. We were heading to Murano to see the glassmakers. We took a tour and I ended up buying some millefiori jewelry. I got a pendant and matching earrings.

## La Cantante

We headed to Pisa after our time in Murano. The town of the great leaning tower. We checked into our hotel, Hotel Bologna. We didn't have a performance today as most of the day was spent on the bus. Nor did we have a performance tomorrow. It was going to spent as a group in the Piazza dei Miracoli. Eleazar didn't want us to tax our voices while we were on the trip and he had decided that every other day would be some cultural event as a group while the other days would be performances.

After the night I had with Edward, and the night previous that Alice had with Jasper, I declared that we would have a girls' night. Edward and Jasper pouted. Tyler beamed as he got to stay in his room, not on some couch with Ben. We ate dinner at a café near the hotel. Then we headed into our respective rooms at the Hotel Bologna. Edward tried, to no avail, to 'puppy dog look' me into letting him stay with us. I gave him a hard glare and he sulked as he went into his room.

Alice and Rose used our 'girls' night to their advantage. We spent most of the evening discussing my wedding. Rose even did a trial run on my hairstyle that she envisioned me having. Alice prattled on about the lingerie shower. However, I could tell that she had a touch of resentment that I wasn't having a bachelorette party. She really needed to get over that. Rose said that she knew a girl, Olivia that she went to high school with that did sex toy parties. Olivia was going to be our entertainment. As Rose worked on my hair, we finalized the list for the lingerie shower. We fell asleep after that. I shared a bed with Rose while Alice got her own. *Entitled little pixie.*

The next day started later than usual. We met in the restaurant of the hotel for breakfast. Edward and Jasper looked like hell. Tyler had a shit-eating grin on his face. Rose asked what was up. Tyler snorted and explained how he kept Edward and Jasper up with his alarm and practical jokes. Payback for kicking him out of the room. I snickered, but felt really bad for Tyler. I also felt bad for Rose.

"Guys, I know that I'll probably get yelled at, but I think we need to stick to our own rooms. It's not fair to Tyler or Rose," I sighed.

"But, Bella," Alice whined.

"Alice, she's right," Edward said. "Bella and I spend every waking moment together and every moment in between. I agree with you, baby."

"Me too, Ali," Jasper said with a grimace. "As pissed as I am at Tyler for the shaving cream he shoved up my nose last night, it wasn't fair for us to... *you know*." Alice pouted. She got up from our table and stomped away. Jasper blew out a breath and followed her.

"What's wrong with her?" Tyler asked.

"She's feeling like Jasper's pulling away from her," Edward said. "We talked briefly while you were in the shower, Tyler."

"Is he pulling away from her?" Rose asked.

"Not in the way that she thinks. Jasper is head over heels with my sister. He wants to propose," Edward said. "But he's afraid she's going to say no. He has the ring and everything. He's going to do it while we're in Italy. In Rome."

"Did he ask Carlisle?" I asked.

"The day of the concert," Edward smiled. "Of course he said yes. He loves Jasper. So does Esme."

"Holy crow," Rose said. "It takes a special person to love the pixie."

"That it does," Edward sighed. "Or massive amounts of liquor. I usually opt for the liquor."

"Well, at least she can plan her own bachelorette party. She can get over my non-existent one," I snickered. We finished our breakfast and we headed out to the buses. Eleazar took attendance on the buses. We drove to Piazza dei Miracoli and were divided into four groups. Alice and Jasper were in a separate group from us. Presumably because she was mad at me. Her gaze was cold

## La Cantante

when she looked at me. *Perhaps my idea will not go over well. I may be staying with Edward and Tyler. YEESH!*

Our tour guide explained the history of the Piazza de Miracoli. He also told the story about the leaning tower. He prattled off its dimensions and how many degrees it leaned. He then gave us some time to take some photos of us pretending to hold the tower up with a forced perspective photograph. We then walked to the cathedral and we got another history lesson. It was a relaxing afternoon but a lot of fun. We spent the rest of day at the Piazza, doing the touristy attractions. We just needed to be back at the buses by four. Edward and I got some late lunch with Rose and Tyler. We gave Alice and Jasper their space.

Rose and Tyler decided to check out some fountain nearby while Edward and I enjoyed the sun. He lay down and I put my head on his lap. Edward put in his iPod and placed one ear bud in his ear and the other in mine. We listened to some quiet classical music as we absorbed the sun. All too quickly, we loaded back onto the bus and drove back to the hotel. Once we got there, it was tense. Alice wouldn't talk to Rose or I. Nor would she acknowledge Edward or Tyler. Again, Alice got her own bed. I was getting pissed at her immature behavior. She was driving me nuts with her cold shoulder act. All because I suggested that we stay in our rooms as intended.

*This was going to be a long trip.*

## Florence

We woke up early for our drive for Florence. We only spent one day in Pisa. Eleazar told us that we had a performance at two in the afternoon at the Hotel Davanzati, which also was the hotel we were staying at. Then we were going to see the opera at St. Mark's Anglican church. *Carmen* was the opera we had tickets for.

Rose, Edward, Tyler and I went into the first bus that drove us to Florence. Alice and Jasper took the other bus. She was still miffed at us over the whole sleeping arrangement thing. There was also something else, but we couldn't

## La Cantante

figure it out. Jasper knew, but he wasn't about to betray her confidence. We were sitting on the bus when Tyler piped up. "Alice still seems pretty pissed at you, Bella."

"Yeah, I know. It's not like I killed her puppy. I just suggested that we stick with original sleeping arrangement," I grumbled as I sat back in the chair. "It's really not fair to you or Rose."

"Alice has a tendency to blow things out of proportion," Edward explained. "I accidently washed some of her clothes with mine and she had a snit fit over the fact that I didn't use the right laundry detergent. I was doing her a damn favor and she screeches at me. She didn't speak to me for a month. It took an intervention by Esme to get Alice get the pole out of her ass and realize that she was wrong. Or at least overreacting. If she doesn't return to normal by tomorrow, I'll talk with her."

On the bus, we watched a movie. It was some lame musical, but it held our attention. A little over a few hours later, we pulled up to an elegant hotel. I gasped and laced my fingers with Edward's. "It's so pretty."

"Not as pretty as you, love," Edward smirked as he kissed my temple.

"You're biased, Edward," I snickered.

"And this is a bad thing because...?" Edward asked, arching a brow. I rolled my eyes and smacked his arm. Eleazar distributed keys and told us that we were staying in suites. Four rooms that combined in one common room. We could have mixed gender suites, but not mixed gender rooms. We still represented Emerson University. Eleazar did not want the Emerson name to be associated with 'brothel-like' behavior. *Oh, if you only knew...*

We paired up with two other groups. Some friends of Tyler's. We headed up to our room and changed for our performance. Alice was still giving us the silent treatment and it was really pissing me off. Edward gently rubbed my back through my dress and he kissed my cheek. "I'll talk to her. She is taking this too far. Acting irrational and immature."

## La Cantante

"I'm ready to strangle her," Rose said as she tossed her blonde hair over her shoulder. "I love Alice. I really do. But, really? This is bigger than the whole rooming situation. "

"Rose, let me handle Alice. It takes a certain 'finesse,'" Edward sighed as he ran his hands through his hair. "After the concert, I'll take her out for dinner and we'll chat."

"Thank you, Edward," Rose and I said. We headed downstairs to the backstage area of the ballroom we were singing in. Eleazar led us in a warm up. Edward went up to Alice after that and he was talking to her in hushed tones. Her body language indicated that she was *pissed*. Edward was equally as mad, but he was standing his ground. Edward's eyes darkened and he forcefully shook his finger at Alice. She pouted and her stance changed. Alice nodded and ran to Jasper. Edward pinched the bridge of his nose. "That didn't look like it went to well," Rose whispered.

"I think she agreed but gave him shit about it," I sighed. Edward walked up to me and wrapped his strong arms around me. He mumbled in my shoulder. "What, Edward?"

Edward raised his head and looked at me. "I'm going out with Alice. But she's in rare form. This is definitely something more than the damn rooming situation."

We lined up and filed onto the risers. Eleazar introduced us and we performed the same pieces from the last concert. After our concert, we were dismissed and given the time before the opera at St. Mark's Anglican Church to ourselves. Rose and I decided to take a nap. Edward was going out with Alice. As we settled in for our nap, Rose chuckled. "I have a theory."

"A theory about what, Rose?"

"Why Alice is being a megabitch," Rose answered simply.

"And what do you think it is?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"She's pregnant," Rose said. "She's been emotional for awhile now. You haven't really seen it since you don't live with her. But she's a hot mess. Crying one minute and laughing hysterically the next."

"Isn't she on birth control?"

"I never seen her take a pill and I don't think she gets the shot like you," Rose shrugged.

"Jasper must be having a heart attack."

"Does he know?" Rose countered.

"Maybe that's why Alice thinks he's pulling away," I supposed. "We'll just have to wait and see." Rose set her alarm on her phone and we snuggled into the bed for a nap. It seemed as soon as we put our heads on the pillow, the alarm was blaring. Rose groaned and I was ready to throw her phone out the window. I got up and dressed for the opera. I wore a black dress with a turquoise blue sash around the waist. My shoes were a pair of pewter heels. Rose wore a green wrap dress and beige heels. We noticed the Edward and Alice were not back. Jasper was sitting in the common area, watching some Italian soap opera. "Is Edward and Alice back?"

"Nope. They need to get here soon," Jasper sighed. "The bus is leaving in a half hour."

"Jas, what's going on with Alice?" Rose asked bluntly.

"I don't know. Perhaps this conversation with Edward will get her to open up to me. I'm supposed to be her boyfriend and she's been distant and cold. But in the bedroom, she's crazy. I don't get it."

Rose gave me a sidelong glance and arched her perfect brow. I huffed out a breath and plopped down on the sofa next to Jasper. We sat in the common area until we heard the door open. Edward opened the door and Alice ran into the room, directly into our room. She looked like she was crying. Edward's

## La Cantante

eyes were also puffy. *Fuck*. "Give me a few minutes and I'll be right out. Jasper, go talk to my sister. You need to calm her down," Edward sighed. He jogged into his room and he came back out dressed in a pair of black dress pants and black dress shirt.

"Is Alice coming?" Rose asked.

"Unlikely." Edward gave me a tight smile and laced his fingers with mine. He offered an arm for Rose. She took it and we headed down to the lobby to load on the bus. When Eleazar took attendance, he called Alice and Jasper's name. Edward explained that Alice was sick and Jasper was caring for her. Eleazar nodded and we headed to St. Mark's Anglican Church. Our tickets were distributed and we settled into our seats. The opera, *Carmen*, was fantastic. The baritone who played the part of Escamillo was the best I'd ever heard. Carmen was okay, but her sex appeal was astonishing. We headed back to the hotel. "You may not want to go into your room, Bella. Jasper and Alice have a great deal to talk about."

"What's wrong, Edward?" I squeaked.

"Tyler, do you mind if the girls stay with us?"

"Nah. As long as I get to sleep in a bed, I'm cool," Tyler winked.

"You're still stuck with me, punk," Edward snickered. "I'm pretty certain that Rose or Bella do not want to sleep with your stinky ass."

"You kick, Edward. And you try to nuzzle me. Bella, sleep with your fiancé, so I don't get groped at night. I promise I'll behave, Rose," Tyler said as he held up his right hand.

"One finger on my side of the bed and you'll have the stiletto shoved so far up your ass..." Rose warned. Tyler nodded and crossed his heart. "Good. As long as we're clear. What about clothes? All of our clothes are in the room."



## La Cantante

"I have some shorts and t-shirts," Edward shrugged. We all headed into Edward's room. Edward handed Rose a pair of shorts and one of his Emerson t-shirts. I plucked at his dress shirt and he shrugged it off, tossing me a pair of boxers. Rose and I changed in the bathroom, while the guys changed in the bedroom. Edward crawled into bed and I slid in next to him. "So, I went out with Alice after our concert."

"And...did she tell you why she was so cranky?" Rose asked.

"She was pregnant," Edward said. "But miscarried the baby."

"Damn," Rose said as she held up her hand to her mouth. "When?"

"She miscarried at the beginning of May. She was around eight weeks along, but was still pregnant. Alice is determined to get pregnant again. That's why she's insisting on staying with Jasper."

"But, she's still in school," I said.

"Alice has always wanted to be a mother. She was over the moon when she found out she was. But it was a couple days later that she experienced the miscarriage," Edward said, his brow furrowed.

"How did I not know? I live with her," Rose said.

"Alice is good at masking her feelings. She probably fell apart when you weren't there. However, when she holds a grudge, steer clear."

"What did Jasper say? Did Jasper know?" Tyler asked.

"I don't think so. However, knowing him, he'd be a panicked mess. He always toted that he was going to be forty before he was a father," Edward said as mimicked Jasper's tone. As we were talking, Jasper stormed into the room. His face was red and flushed. "Jas, what's wrong?"

## La Cantante

"Alice and I...we're through. She lied to me about her being on birth control. I need to get out of here. Can I borrow your credit card, Edward? I need to go home," Jasper said coldly. "I need to go to Texas."

**A/N: Cliffy...sorry. I was going to put Italy in one chapter, but decided against it. So, here's the first half of Italy. With Jasper and Alice drama. Leave me love xoxox!**

# L'Italia, la parte due

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 95: L'Italia, la parte due

### EPOV

*As we were talking, Jasper stormed into the room. His face was red and flushed. "Jas, what's wrong?"*

*"Alice and I...we're through. She lied to me about her being on birth control. I need to get out of here. Can I borrow your credit card, Edward? I need to go home," Jasper said coldly. "I need to go to Texas."*

"Jasper, don't be hasty," Rose said.

"No. I need to get the fuck out of here. She LIED to me! She said that she was on birth control. We haven't been using a condom since New Year's Eve. She promised that she was protected. I'm not ready to be a dad," Jasper yelled.  
"Edward, man, please?"

"I'll help you out. After you talk to Eleazar," I offered.

"Fine. I'll be back," Jasper said as he left the room in a huff.

Rose and Bella looked at each other. They gathered their clothes and went into their room. I knew that Alice was going to get it from them. She got an earful from me. I was never so disappointed in my sister. She knew Jasper's feelings about babies. It was incredibly selfish of her to put him in this position.

## La Cantante

"This is one serious mindfuck, Edward," Tyler said as he looked at me. His brown eyes were huge and his tanned skin was pale.

"Tell me about it. I was ready to wring Alice's neck," I said.

"Not because she was pregnant?" Tyler asked.

"No, because of her selfishness. Alice can be the most selfless person. However, when she focuses her mind on something, she goes after it 110%. When she found out she was pregnant, that's all she wanted. A baby. Then, she lost it. Alice was determined to get that lost baby back," I shrugged. "I am so disappointed."

"What happened at your dinner?"

"I called her out on her behavior and she blew me off. She said it was nothing and that I was overreacting. That Rose and Bella were overreacting. I told her no and that there was something more. Then Alice broke down, spilling everything about the pregnancy, miscarriage and her plan to get pregnant again. She knew she was wrong. She could see my disappointment in my face. But she was determined. However, Jasper needed to be informed. He did not deserve to go into this blind."

"If Bella did that to you, what would you do?"

"I'd probably react like Jasper. The only difference between Jasper and I is that I want to have children. Jasper thinks they are disgusting pooping machines. I personally think they are cute," I said. "I can't wait until Bella has our babies. But it's not going to be for awhile. We're still in school. Too young."

"But not too young to be married," Tyler countered.

"No. I've never felt more sure about anything in my life. Bella is my soul mate. She is my other half. There is no doubt in my mind that we will be together forever," I said with a wistful smile. "If Bella told me that she was pregnant tomorrow, I'd probably have a minor panic attack, but we'd work together."

## La Cantante

We'd raise this baby and love it with all of our hearts. But it takes trust. Jasper lost all trust in Alice. It will take an act of God to get that back."

"You want babies, Edward?" Tyler squeaked.

"As many as Bella is willing to have," I smiled.

Jasper stormed into the room and he grabbed his suitcase. "Eleazar told me to go."

"What did you say to him, Jas?" Tyler asked.

"I have a family emergency. So, are you going to help me, Edward? Or do I need to call my parents for assistance?" Jasper snapped. I reached for my wallet and handed him my credit card. "I'll pay you back later. I promise. Though, I'm not sure I'm going to see you any time soon."

"What does that mean?" I asked.

"I can't be near Alice. I am so incredibly pissed. I said things to her that were pretty hurtful. But she deserved it. She betrayed every single confidence. I just...I can't," Jasper said as he wiped his cheeks. "I love her, but I can't be with her if I can't trust her. I'll send you a check, okay?"

"You'll still be my best man for the wedding, right?" I asked.

"Don't hold your breath, Edward," Jasper said sadly. "I love you, too, but I can't. Too painful."

"What about Breaking Midnight?" Tyler questioned.

"You can get a new bassist. Tyler, you can play, right? There you go," Jasper said as he finished packing. "I'm going to use the business office and then I'll bring your card back up to you, Edward. I'm really sorry."

## La Cantante

"So am I, Jasper," I said with a frown. Jasper rolled his suitcase out of the room and left. I flopped back onto my pillows, rubbing my face furiously.

"Mindfuck. Perfect way to describe it, Tyler."

"Sorry, man," Tyler replied.

"So, you want to be the bassist for Breaking Midnight?" I asked.

"I don't think Jasper was serious," Tyler said nervously.

"He's not coming back. He'll give me my card and then he'll be gone," I whispered.

"Let's get through the rest of the trip. Discuss it with your remaining band mates and then we'll talk, okay?" Tyler said.

"Yeah. Sorry you got roped into this."

"Dude, it wasn't your fault. I'm just worried about Jasper. I'm worried about you. Hell, I'm worried about Alice," Tyler said sympathetically. I shrugged and curled around my pillow.

Jasper came back in, handing me back my credit card. "I'm leaving in an hour. I'm truly sorry, Edward. I hope that someday we can..." Jasper said sadly.

"Just because you ended it with my sister doesn't mean you have to end our friendship," I answered.

"Seeing you reminds me of her. Too painful. Your check will be in the mail when I get the cash. Perhaps I'll see you for the wedding. But don't count on it," Jasper said as he hugged me briefly. "Later." Jasper got up and left, slamming the door shut.

"This trip was supposed to be so much fun. Now, it's so not," Tyler grumbled.

## La Cantante

"Tell me about it," I sighed. I reached for the light and shut it off. Suffice it to say, sleep did not come. At all.

### Assisi

The alarm went off in the room. Tyler groaned. As did I. I didn't want to leave the bed, but we had to. We had a travel day to Assisi. We were performing tonight at the Basilica di San Francesco. It was our first opportunity to sing parts of the Mozart *Requiem* for an audience. We also were going to have a chamber ensemble accompany us. It was exciting, but my heart was not in singing. My heart was breaking for Alice and Jasper. Mainly Jasper. Alice still pissed me off.

I packed my bag, noticing that Jasper's tuxedo was still in my garment bag. I frowned but continued cleaning my room. Tyler was cursing a blue streak as he was packing. "Thank GOD it's a long trip today. I need some sleep," Tyler grumbled.

"Me too," I said. We rolled our bags out into the common room. Bella and Rose were sitting on the couch. They looked like they had been crying most of the night. "What's wrong?"

Rose held up a note.

*Dear Everyone,*

*I can't be here. I need to go home. Being on this trip without Jasper is too much. So, I booked a flight back to the states. I'll see you when you get back.*

*I'm sorry for ruining everyone's trip and for being so selfish.*

*Alice*

"When did you find this?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"We fell asleep around three. When the alarm went off, this was on the pillow," Bella croaked. "All of her stuff was gone."

"You didn't hear her?" Tyler asked.

"No. We were exhausted," Rose answered. "Alice was inconsolable. We fell asleep only after she did."

"We need to tell Eleazar," Bella said. Her eyes were red and she was wearing her glasses. Her mahogany hair was pulled into a messy bun but didn't hold any shine. She was defeated. So was Rose. She looked so exhausted and worn.

"On the bus," I said. Bella nodded and stood up. I held her close and kissed her forehead. "I'm sorry, love."

"Not your fault, Edward. This is fucked up. I promise you, I won't ever do that to you. It's not fair," Bella whispered.

"I know, beautiful," I said as I held her tightly. Rose sniffled and she curled up. "Does Rose want a hug, too?"

"Yeah," Rose said as she jutted out her lip. "I want Emmett, but you'll do." I chuckled and released Bella. She smiled and pushed me toward Rose. Rose fell into my arms and she cried into my shoulder. "Thanks, Edward."

"No problem," I said as I squeezed her gently. "Let's load up the bus and we'll hopefully have some fun in Assisi."

"Right, Edward," Bella said sarcastically.

"I know, I know."

We rolled our bags to the lobby and loaded up the two coach buses. Bella and I went over to Eleazar, explaining Alice's sudden disappearance. He frowned and asked what was wrong. Without going into too much detail, we explained Alice and Jasper's dilemma. Eleazar offered his condolences and understanding.



## La Cantante

Though, their places in University Singers were at stake due to their behavior. I then explained that Jasper might not be returning to Emerson. This further distressed Eleazar. Not that I blamed him. It distressed me. Jasper was my best friend. Because of the selfish behavior of my sister, I lost that.

Bella and I sat in the rear of the bus. She nestled into my shoulder and promptly zonked out. I was close behind her. However, as I was just beginning to nod off, my phone rang from my pocket. "Fuck my life," I moaned.

"Let it go to voicemail," Bella said.

"It's probably Carlisle or Esme," I said as I looked at the caller ID. "Yep, Esme. Hello, Mom."

"What happened? Alice called and she was sobbing. I could barely understand her. I faintly heard something about a baby, Jasper and your name. Bella's not pregnant with Jasper's baby is she?"

"What? NO! Bella is certainly not pregnant with Jasper's baby. That would, um, weird," I said, scrunching my nose. "Alice found out in early May that she was pregnant. Unfortunately, she had a miscarriage. Since then, she's been going at it with Jasper to try and get pregnant again. Only Jasper thought she was on birth control. They broke up."

"Wait a minute. Alice was pregnant?" Esme squeaked.

"Yep. She told me last night when I took her out to dinner. She was being a bitch to everyone on the trip. I figured I'd try to finagle the information out of her," I said.

"Oh my word," Esme said. "Is she with you?"

"No. She caught a flight home," I said.

"Do you have the information?"

## La Cantante

"No, I don't. She left in the middle of the night," I grimaced. "However, she would have to fly out from Pisa. That's where we were last night. I'm sorry I can't be more help."

"Oh, she's so grounded," Esme said. "I'll call you when she gets in. Thanks, my sweet boy."

"Anytime, Mom. Love you," I said.

"Love you, too." Esme hung up and I slipped my phone back into my pocket. "I'm so exhausted." Bella nodded sleepily against my neck. She patted my head and put hers in my lap. I idly played with her hair as I fell asleep.

A few hours later, we pulled off the highway and got some food. Bella and I split a calzone and some Italian soda. When we loaded on the bus, she put my head in her lap and we reversed positions. She played with my hair as we lay together. Eventually we pulled up to the Basilica di San Francesco in Assisi. Eleazar was met by an older gentleman dressed like a priest. He had us get off the bus and we walked into the exquisite church. Bella and I linked hands. There was something about being here with her that made my heart sputter. I loved her so much. I smiled for the first time today and I kissed Bella's cheek. "I love you, beautiful."

"I love you more, handsome," she said as she kissed me chastely. Eleazar barked out orders and we lined up on the altar. We did a brief rehearsal with the chamber ensemble for the Mozart *Requiem*. We then ate dinner in the church fellowship hall with the parishioners and staff. They were all nice and very welcoming to us. After our dinner, we went to change into our concert attire. We met in the fellowship hall before our concert and did a brief warm up. It was weird to not have Alice and Jasper with us. However, the show must go on.

We lined up and headed up to the church. We performed our sacred pieces with a smattering of secular music. However, we began our show with some of the *Requiem* pieces. Afterward, we packed up our belongings and headed to our hotel, the Hotel Giotto. Since it was such a long night the night previous, we

## La Cantante

just headed into our rooms and crashed. However, in the middle of the night, I heard a quiet knock. I opened the door and saw Bella on the other side. "What's wrong, love?"

"I can't sleep. Can I stay with you?" she asked, biting her lip. I nodded and ushered her into my room. Tyler was snoring in the bed. "Christ, how can you stand that?"

"Ear plugs," I said as I held out my bright orange ear plugs. Bella arched a brow and crawled into the bed. She lay down and I spooned my body around hers. "I love you, Bella. Don't ever forget that."

"I love you, too. I'm just worried about Alice and Jasper," she muttered.

"Me, too, love. Me, too," I said as I kissed her neck. "Try and sleep." Bella nodded and laced her fingers with mine. With my love in my arms, I fell into a deep sleep.

## Sorrento

When I woke up, I was alone. Bella left a note saying that she felt guilty about leaving Rose by herself. I didn't blame her. I sighed and padded to the bathroom. I showered quickly. Tyler was still asleep and I decided to head down to the lobby. I got there and Eleazar was sitting in the restaurant, drinking a cappuccino. "Hello, Eleazar," I said politely.

"Ah, Edward. How are you this fine morning?" Eleazar asked with a grin.

"A little tired," I said. "How about you?"

"Jet lagged, but fine," he chuckled. "Would you like some coffee?"

"That sounds great," I smiled. Eleazar flagged down the server and ordered another cappuccino.

## La Cantante

"I'm sorry about Alice and Jasper. Am I safe to assume that's why you're so tired?"

"Yeah. It's complicated, though," I shrugged as I prepared my coffee. "There is something I wanted to discuss with you."

"What's that, Edward?"

"At Emerson, we have University Singers, Concert Choir, Emerson Express and Woman's Chorale. However, it would be nice to have a men's group. Similar to the Woman's Chorale, you know? I enjoy my time with Emerson Express, but my scholarship dictates I need to be in two performance groups. That leaves me with University Singers, Concert Choir and Emerson Express. I don't want to be in Concert Choir since they're not that good."

"No, they're not. However, they are the non-music majors. Talented musicians in their own right, but not like University Singers."

"I'm left with Emerson Express. I'm good at the stuff they do, but I want to be challenged as a singer," I explained. "I don't get that challenge with Express."

"You make a valid point, Edward. I'll make you a deal. If I can get Dr. Volturi to approve it, *you* can run a men's choral group and have it count for your second performance ensemble for your scholarship. You make the musical decisions, conduct, arrange. I'll even try to finagle some independent study credits for you in addition to that. You are incredibly talented and driven, Edward. We need more students like you. And your fiancée."

"Thank you, Eleazar. That means so much to me," I said with a shy grin. "How big should this men's group be?"

"That's entirely up to you," Eleazar said. "You're the director."

"Hmmm, perhaps a small vocal ensemble. Two men on each vocal part," I mused. "There's the main choir and there's The Other Guys."

## La Cantante

"The Other Guys?"

"As a name, The Other Guys," I shrugged. "Just a thought. An eight voice men's vocal ensemble. Arranging songs from today into a cappella pieces."

"You could do it, Edward," Eleazar said with a knowing grin. "I'll send out an email to Dr. Volturi today before we leave the hotel. Hopefully we'll get the preliminary approval and we can begin the audition process. Would you be opposed to having more students or you just want eight?"

"It all depends on the vocal blend. If I have 32 guys that work well together, then sweet," I said with a crooked grin.

"Good answer, Edward. I'll send off that email now," Eleazar said as he dropped some Euros on the table. "See you on the bus." Eleazar jogged to the business center and I finished my coffee. I headed up to the room, happy in Eleazar's suggestion. That would be cool to say that I created a choral group at Emerson. I was the inaugural director. I mentally patted myself on the back for that one. *You rock, Cullen. Good job!*

When I got back to the room, Tyler was grumbling as he was packing his shit. "This whole new city every two days sucks. You know that?"

"Yes, Tyler, I do. We're going to be in Sorrento for two days. Well, technically three. We're driving there today. Performing there tomorrow and leaving the day after next. Then the rest of the trip is going to be in Roma. Chillax, man. You're making me nervous."

"Don't get the tick, Eddie," Tyler said as he moved about in a spastic manner. I threw a pillow at him and chuckled. We lugged our suitcases down to the lobby. Bella and Rose were doing the same. However, I noticed Bella was limping.

"Bella? What happened?" I asked.

## La Cantante

"I tripped over Rose's shoe and twisted my ankle. I'm fine," she said. I growled lightly and pushed her into a chair that was close by. I gingerly picked up her foot and it was pretty swollen. I gently moved her foot and she yelped in pain. "Don't move it like that."

"Bella, this is not fine."

"Oh, we're going to be on a bus all day. If it's still bothering me when we get to Sorrento..."

"Bella," I said, pouting my lips.

"Trust me, Edward. Please?" she cooed as she tangled her hands in my hair. "Pretty please?"

"It could be broken."

"It's not broken. Just a sprain," Bella said with a dismissive wave of the hand. "I could always have you carry me everywhere."

"Don't tempt me, Swan," I said arching my brow.

"Did you hear from your parents?" Bella asked.

"No. Not yet. I'm going to call them later today," I said as I kissed her ankle. "You are so clumsy, Bella."

"I'm not *that* clumsy. Rose left her shoes out in the middle of the room," Bella said as she shot a glare at Rose.

"You were so busy reading that you didn't notice said shoe," Rose said as she plopped down next to us. "We are so shopping in Sorrento. Edward, you will be our pack mule."

"What?" I laughed.

## La Cantante

"I need someone with muscles. You're no Emmett, but you'll do. You can pick me up so you're muscle-y enough," Rose giggled.

"I'm glad I could assist you, Rosalie," I flexed my bicep and made a grimace. "However, I may be carrying this one since she's gimpy."

"Shut it, Edward," Bella said as she smacked my arm. Our luggage was loaded onto the bus and we got on as well. Bella and I took the very last seat again. Bella took out a book and popped in her ear buds. I put my head on her shoulder and watched as the Italian countryside flew by us. Bella idly ran her hand over my forearm and I dozed off as she did so. The slow methodical motions lulled me into a deep sleep.

We arrived at Sorrento and Eleazar explained that we had the afternoon to ourselves. We needed to be back at the bus by no later than five. Rose, Tyler, Ben, Bella and I were going to walk along the markets in Sorrento. Actually, more specifically in Naples. Bella was walking better, but still had a slight limp. She gave me a pointed look and she insisted that she was fine. I slung my camera bag over my shoulder and we headed to the markets. Rose was like a kid in a candy store. She negotiated with the merchants for purses, clothes, and jewelry. Bella watched her in shock and awe. As did I. She was a woman possessed. She made Alice look like amateur when it came to negotiations. I was walking and I saw a shop with some jewelry in it. Bella was always commented that my eyes were the exact shade of emeralds. I saw a beautiful emerald jewelry set that Bella would love. I walked into the shop and approached a sales person. "*Scusarsi. Lei parla gli inglesi?*" I asked the sales person.

"Yes. How can I help you, sir?" the older gentleman asked.

"The emerald jewelry set in the window. I'd like to purchase it," I said with a crooked grin.

"Is very expensive. You have that kind of money?" he asked skeptically.

## La Cantante

"Yes, I do," I said, feeling a bit miffed at his automatic response that a young American couldn't afford expensive jewelry.

"I apologize if I offended. Who is it for?"

"My fiancée," I answered. "For our wedding day."

"Congratulations. When is the big day?"

"August 13th," I grinned. "Not soon enough."

"I hope your wedding day is beautiful, Mr....?"

"Cullen. Edward Cullen," I replied as I shook his hand.

"Mr. Cullen. I'm Pietro. Nice to meet you," Pietro said as he scuttled off to get the emerald jewelry. He placed it into a box and showed it to me for inspection. It was a gold necklace with emeralds and diamond alternating about ever inch apart. The earrings were drop earrings with round emerald at the ear and inlaid emeralds in a pear shape for the drop. This would be one of my many presents for Bella on our wedding day. He wrapped them in a bag and gave me my total. I took out my credit card and paid for them. "Enjoy your jewelry. If your fiancée is as lovely as it, you are incredibly lucky man."

"She's more beautiful," I smiled as I took my bag. "Grazie."

I left the jewelry shop and caught with Rose, Bella, Tyler and Ben. They were seated on a bench, eating some gelato. "Where'd you go, Edward?" Ben asked.

"I saw something I like and I wanted to get it," I shrugged. "Can I have some?" Bella scooped some gelato onto a spoon and fed me some pomegranate gelato. "That's different. I like it."

"Me too," she replied as she shoveled some into her own mouth. "Esme called me. Alice is home. And miserable."



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"Shit," I groaned. Bella handed the gelato to me and I nibbled on it. "What else did she say?"

"Call her. I think there's something more going on. Alice is horribly depressed and Carlisle is worried about her mental health," Bella said with a pout. "Like tempted to put her into the hospital."

I whipped out my cell phone and dialed my parent's phone number. It rang a few times. Carlisle picked up. "Hello?"

"Dad?"

"Edward, I'm so glad you called. I tried reaching you earlier, but it just went to voice mail," Carlisle said.

"I had my phone off. Sorry. How's Alice?"

"Extremely depressed. We're taking her to a psychiatrist in the morning. I've had to sedate her because she was so upset," Carlisle said sadly. "I'm in contact with DCFS in Chicago to see if I can get a medical history on her birth parents. She's demonstrating bipolar symptoms. I'm curious if either one of her parents were diagnosed as bipolar."

"What does that mean, Carlisle?" I asked as I wrapped my arm around Bella's waist. She handed the gelato to Tyler who eagerly took it and looked into my eyes, her beautiful face marred with worry.

"She'll have to be medicated for the rest of her life," Carlisle said sadly. "But, we'll have to see."

"Can I talk to her?"

"No. She's sleeping," Carlisle explained. "Besides, she's incredibly pissed off at you. She will only talk to Bella. She was adamant about that."

"What Alice did was incredibly irresponsible and selfish, Dad," I said.

## La Cantante

"I know. I agree with you. That's why she won't talk to me, either," Carlisle sighed. "She doesn't get it. Anyhow, I wanted to let you know. How's Italy?"

"Besides the drama? Fine. Lots of culture. Lots of shopping. Rose is giving Alice a run for her money in the shopping category. Lots of music," I smiled. "It's been good."

"I'm glad you're having fun. Can I speak to your fiancée?"

"Sure," I said as I handed my phone to Bella. I could faintly hear Carlisle explain that Alice was only going to speak with Bella. Bella said that Alice could call her anytime. *She's so perfect and loving. I am in awe of her. I love her so much.* Bella finished her conversation with Carlisle and hung up the phone.

"That's really surprising," Bella mused.

"Tell me about it," I mumbled.

"Do you guys want to go see Pompeii? And Mount Vesuvius?" Ben asked as he flipped through Bella's book.

"Definitely. Let's just drop this stuff at the bus," Rose said as she gestured to her bags by her feet.

"How are you going to fit all of that stuff in your suitcase, Rosalie?" I joked.

"I packed an extra bag. No biggie," she shrugged. We trudged back to the bus and found the bus driver smoking outside of the bus. He let us in to drop off our purchases. However, I was not going to let go of Bella's jewelry. I stuffed it in my camera bag in the secret compartment behind the camera. We caught a cab and we drove to Pompeii. We wandered for a little bit and took pictures. It was amazing at how well preserved the city was. It was also freaky to see the mummies from the volcano. All too soon, we had to catch a cab back to the bus and load up. We headed to the hotel, Hotel Corallo, which was a few minutes from the center of town. It was also situated on the cliff overlooking the

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Marina di Sant'Agnello. We checked in and spent the evening watching movies in the girls' room. I held Bella close and eventually fell asleep on her bed.

I woke up the next morning with an angel curled up on my chest. I noticed that Tyler was sleeping on the couch and Rose in the other bed. I squeezed Bella and kissed her forehead. "Love you, Edward," she mumbled as she buried her nose in my shirt. "You smell good."

"Sure, Bella. I'm wearing the clothes from yesterday and I was sweating something awful," I snickered.

"Shut it. I love the smell of your cologne," she said as she opened her deep brown eyes. "You need to shave, Scruffy."

I ran my hand over my jaw and scrunched my nose. "I do. Shit. I'm going to head across the hall and do that. Breakfast?"

"Of course," Bella said as she kissed me sweetly. I grabbed my shoes and padded to my room. I took out my bag of toiletries and hopped into the shower. I scrubbed the grime off my body and washed my hair. I finished my shower and shaved my scruff off my face. I went into the bedroom and pulled out my clothes for the day: a pair of shorts and short sleeved polo shirt. We were spending the morning on the street of the Nativity Scene Makers. Then we were heading to another local church for a performance in the late afternoon. Rose wanted to go to this club in Sorrento. We decided that we would go tonight to club called Voila. Bella knocked on my door and she was wearing a multicolored peasant skirt and a black t-shirt. On her feet were a pair of black ballet flats. "Ready for breakfast?"

"Definitely. You look beautiful, Bella," I said as I wrapped my arms around her waist. She ran her fingers through my damp hair and kissed me sweetly. "I'm the luckiest man on the planet. Do you know that?"

"I know that I'm the luckiest woman," she cooed as she kissed me again. I angled my head so I could deepen our kiss. My tongue slid between her lips and she moaned quietly. "Edward, we should stop."

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"Don't wanna. I need you, baby," I said as I kissed down her neck.

"We're in the middle of the hallway."

"Crap."

"Come on, handsome. Let's get us fed and then some more shopping," Bella said with a wry grin.

"Try to contain your excitement, Bella," I teased as I poked her in the ribs. She growled and laced her hands with mine. We ended up going to a café across the street from the hotel and getting some cappuccino and decadent breakfast food. Over breakfast, I told her about what Eleazar said about the men's vocal ensemble. Bella seemed overjoyed at the prospect. She then tried to weasel out where I was going to take her for our honeymoon. I smiled smugly and didn't tell her a thing. She tried everything. Sitting on my lap, copping a feel, flashing her fabulous cleavage, nibbling my ear, but she didn't get me to budge. I wanted to. But, I behaved.

I paid our bill and we went back to the hotel. The rest of the University Singers were in the lobby, waiting for the bus. We walked up to Rose who was on the phone with Emmett. She was sniffing but she had a smile on her face. Rose handed her phone to Bella and she spoke with Emmett briefly. Bella's brow furrowed and she gave me a furtive glance. Then, I had Rose's cell phone dropped in my hands. I quirked a brow and held up the phone. "Em?"

"I need your help, Eddie. I'm flying to Rome for your performance at the Sistine Chapel," Emmett gushed.

"Do you need money?"

"No. That's covered. I just need to know where you're staying and shit," Emmett said, the excitement in his voice was overwhelming.

"I'll send you a text with the information. Rose will be so surprised," I smiled.

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"That's not all. I got my grandmother's engagement ring and I'm going to propose," Emmett said as he laughed. "I'm going to ask Rose to be my wife."

"Wow!" I smiled. "When are you getting in?"

"Day after tomorrow. I'm staying at a youth hostel until you guys get there," Emmett explained. "So, send me that stuff and we'll be golden."

"Will do," I said. "Did you hear about Alice and Jas?"

"Jasper called me when he got into Austin. He's a wreck, man. But I don't blame him," Emmett said, his mood shifting radically. "I hope he can pull it together for your wedding."

"To quote Jas, 'don't hold your breath,'" I sighed. "I'll text you later."

"Later, man and thanks," Emmett said as he hung up the phone. I flipped Rose's phone shut and handed it to her. We loaded up on the buses and drove to Via San Gregorio. We roamed around there for awhile. Bella actually purchased a beautiful Nativity scene. She was having it shipped to our apartment. It was too fragile for us to have it our suitcases. The merchant was more than willing to ship it. After lunch we headed to the church that we were performing at. We did a brief warm up and run through of our concert. The priest explained the plan for our concert and then we went to change.

"Dude, my tuxedo shirt is rank," Tyler said as he sniffed his shirt.

"This is why you bring more than one, you moron," I laughed.

"Did you?" Tyler asked.

"I brought a shirt for each day that we were performing, plus one extra," I shrugged as I removed my shirt from my garment bag. "Here." I tossed my extra shirt to Tyler. "It may be snug, but at least you won't smell."

"Are you calling me fat?" Tyler asked in a clearly effeminate voice.

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"No. You're just broader across the chest than me, you douche," I chortled. Tyler flipped me off and put on the shirt. I quickly changed and slipped on my shoes and socks. I reached into my toiletry bag and went into the bathroom. I put on my contacts and went into the fellowship hall, waiting for Bella and Rose. I sent the text to Emmett about our performance and hotel information while in Rome. I also noticed a text from Jasper.

*I'm sorry, Edward. I hope you can forgive me but I don't honestly think I'll make it to your wedding. I'm a mess. I'm so sorry. Give Bella my love and...yeah. - Jasper*

I snarled and copied the message from Jasper. I know it was cruel, but I sent the message to Alice. She needed to know that her actions were not fucking up other people's lives. I lost one of my best men. I lost my best friend. I turned off my phone and slid it into my jacket pocket, burying my head in my hands. Bella danced up to me and sat in my lap. "Spill it, Edward."

"I got a text from Jasper. He's not coming to the wedding," I said sadly as I buried my head in the crook of her neck.

"Can I kill your sister?" Bella seethed. "Jasper will be there. TRUST ME. If I have to fly to Texas and drag him to your parent's house by his hair, he will be there."

"Bella, he's hurting," I explained.

"I know he's hurting. But he's your best man. Your best friend. I want him there. You want him there. We'll figure this all out once we get back to the states. We may have to make a trip to Austin," Bella said.

"Sounds like a plan," I said as I kissed her and wrapped my arms around her waist. "I miss you, baby."

"Um, Edward, I'm right here," she giggled.

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"That's not what I meant," I said, arching a brow. I traced my finger along her jaw and down her neck, grazing her breast. Bella shuddered and buried her head on my shoulder. "I miss being inside you, love."

"Edward," she moaned.

"What?" I asked as I continued my sensual trail of my hand along her body. Never touching her explicitly, but leaving her wanting more.

"You're a tease. You know that? We can't do anything," she whispered as she nibbled on my ear.

"Are you opposed to doing it in public?" I cooed.

"Edward Anthony," she groaned.

"We're going to a club tonight. I'm certain we can find a dark corner and get our release," I said seductively. "Consider it." Bella looked at me, her eyes black with desire but her lip getting a beating from her constant nibbling. I traced my thumb along her lip and kissed her, deeply. Before I released her mouth, I pulled on that lip and growled.

"Okay, I need new panties, Edward," Bella said as she narrowed her eyes at me. "You. Are. In. So. Much. Trouble."

"But you love me," I grinned.

"I guess," Bella said as she sat back in my arms. I pouted and Bella kissed my cheek. "You know I love you."

"I love you more, *il mio cantante*," I whispered as I nibbled on her neck.

"Get a ROOM!" Rose bellowed. Bella flipped her off and we lined up for our concert. An hour and half later, we were done and heading back to the hotel. Rose grabbed Bella and dragged her to get dressed. We were heading to Voila and having a good time. It opened at nine. Tyler and I used the time to catch a

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nap. Tia, Ben and Jessica were also coming with us.

Around eight, I changed into what I was going to wear for the club: a pair of black dress pants, black shoes and black dress shirt. Feeling bold, I didn't put on any boxers. It felt so weird to not have any barrier between me and my pants. But strangely liberating. I was secretly hoping that Bella would consider my indecent proposal. I attacked the rat that was on top of my head and sprayed on some cologne.

"Eddie, man, you want some grub?" Tyler asked.

"Let's get something from the gift shop. I'm not that hungry. That lunch was brutal," I said as I rubbed my hand over my belly. Tyler nodded and we headed down to get some nosh from the gift shop. I got a small sandwich and some soda. Tyler got a lot more. "Jeez, Crowley. You can give Emmett a run for his money in the food department."

"I'm hungry," he said as he paid for his food. "My mom teases me that I'm a walking garbage disposal."

"That's what we call Emmett," I chortled. We headed back up to the room and waited for everyone else to finish getting ready. At nine, the girls knocked on the door and we headed down to the lobby, waiting for Tia, Ben and Jessica. I couldn't tear my eyes away from Bella. She was wearing a fuchsia dress with a halter top. It was shorter in the front and was longer in the back. She wore her pewter heels from the night at the opera and a pair of drop earrings. Her hair was piled on her head in a chic up-do with curly tendrils hanging down. "You look ravishing, Bella," I said as I kissed her exposed neck.

"I have a confession to make, Edward," she cooed.

"What, love?"

"I'm not wearing any panties," she said as she turned in my arms. She stood on her tiptoes and breathed in my ear. "Easy access."



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*Fuck me...Edward's getting some tonight! Schwing!*

"Holy hell, Bella," I croaked. She snickered and licked her lips. *Two can play this game.* "I have my own confession, beautiful."

"What's that, handsome?"

"I'm not wearing any underwear either," I said as I licked her neck. "Easy access." Bella moaned and reached for my package. She rubbed slightly. I pulled away. "Not yet, beautiful. We will be able to do that soon."

"Tease."

"That would be you," I chuckled.

"Come on, bitches. Let's get our dance on," Tia said as she shimmied her shoulders. She grabbed Rose's hand and went out to the taxi line. We all piled into a taxi and drove to Voila. There was a line, but Rose sauntered up to the bouncer, flashing her smile and some cleavage. We were ushered in immediately. The guys went to get something from the bar while the girls found a table. The club reminded me of Eclipse, only playing Italian club music. It was dark with pulsating lights and a smoky atmosphere. I got some beer and a fruity girly drink for Bella. It was the special. I found the girls and gave Bella her drink. I stood behind her stool and wrapped my arms around her waist. She danced on her seat as she drank her beverage.

"This is really good, Edward. What's it called?" Bella asked.

"*La Bella Dea*," I answered. "The Beautiful Goddess. Perfect for my goddess."

"You are such a cheese, Edward," Bella snickered as she kissed my neck. "But you're my cheese."

"Damn straight, woman," I smiled as I kissed her lips. I finished my beer and grabbed Bella's hand. "Let's dance, beautiful."

"I'm too sober to dance," she whined.

"Come on, love. Please?" I pouted.

"You are too much, Edward," Bella giggled as she hopped off the stool. We walked onto the dance floor. There was barely any room. I snaked my arms around Bella's waist and slid my leg between hers. I swayed my hips and Bella moved with me. Her hands rested on my shoulders and she smirked as we danced to the pulsing bass. Our bodies slithered and swayed to the music, moving as one. Bella stepped away and turned around. She laced her fingers with mine and pressed her ass into my growing erection. "Someone's excited," she teased as she wiggled her hips.

"Always for you, love," I said as I removed my left hand from hers, tracing her exposed thigh. Bella moaned and pressed into my cock more. "I want you, baby," I cooed into her ear, licking it slightly. "I need to feel you come around my cock."

She turned around and dragged me to a back hallway. Bella looked around and poked her head in the ladies room. It was empty. She pulled me into the ladies room and flicked the door locked. "We don't have much time, Edward," Bella said as she led me to a bench in the bathroom. "As much as I love you, this us just fucking."

"Fucking can just as much fun as making love," I countered as I sat down on the bench. I traced my fingers up her legs to her core. She was fucking drenched. "God damn, beautiful. You're soaked." I lifted her dress so I could see her perfect pussy. I ran my fingers along her slit and she moaned. I eased two of them into her and she dripped down my hand. "Fuck."

"Edward, I need you," she moaned. With my other hand, I unbuckled my belt and eased my dress pants over my hips. My prominent erection popped out and Bella, leaned down. She stroked my throbbing arousal a few times before she straddled my waist. I sat back and guided her over my cock. Her warmth enveloped me. "God, Edward. I really missed this. You are so fucking big."

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I blushed but looked up at her with a smirk. "I know."

"Ass," Bella laughed as she began riding me. "God, I'm not going to last long. I'm so close already."

I reached for her tie of her dress and released it. Her dress fell to her waist and her beautiful breasts were exposed to me. I clamped down on one of them with my teeth and the other was being massaged by my hand. Bella's fingers fisted in my hair. Her body undulated with music that was thumping through the club. "Edward," she moaned.

"I love you, baby," I said as I kissed her lips. Our tongues fought each other for dominance. Bella's hand tightened in my hair and she pulled on the strands, angling my head so she could attack my neck. *God, she's feisty tonight. Not that I'm complaining.* She sucked and licked at my neck. I bucked my hips against hers and I could feel my body react to her assault. "Fuck, baby. You feel so good. So tight."

"Only for you, Edward. I'm only yours," she moaned in ear as she pulled it between her teeth. "Come for me Edward. I need to feel you spill into my body. Now," she growled.

*Holy hell...*

With her command, my dick twitched and I bit down on her shoulder as I came in her body. Bella's muscles clamped around me and she let out a silent scream. I captured her mouth mine and I kissed her languidly as we calmed our breathing. I held up Bella's dress and she tied the straps around her neck. With grace, Bella slid off me and went into one of the bathroom stalls. I heard her fumble in there and flush before she came back out. "Trying to get rid of the 'squishy' feeling," she replied as she scrunched her nose.

I was still sitting on the bench, my head resting on the wall. I had yet to button my pants. I gave her a loopy grin. "I love you, baby. You are...there are no words to describe you..." I said as I kissed my fingertips in a very stereotypical way.

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"Edward, you are a dork," Bella giggled. "Button up, handsome. I don't want any of those Italian skanks to think that you're giving freebies."

"The only woman who gets to ride me, is you, Bella," I smiled as I tucked in my shirt and buttoned my pants.

"You better believe it, mister," she said as she poked my chest. "Come on. Let's have some fun before heading to Rome tomorrow."

I unlocked the door and we headed back to our table. Tyler and Ben were snickering. Tia and Jessica were shocked. Rose was all out laughing. "Someone got laid," Rose guffawed.

"Shut it, Hale," Bella snapped as she sat down on the stool. "As soon as you get home, you will be ALL over Emmett's business, so shush."

"I want one just like her, Edward," Tyler said as he patted my shoulder.

"She's one of kind," I smiled as I kissed her neck. "And you're mine."

"Yours, Edward. *Il suo cantante*."

**A/N: Italy will be finished up next chapter. It'll be spent in ROMA! Also, there was some confusion about the story. A reviewer mentioned something about the wedding. Edward and Bella are not married yet. They are still engaged. Their wedding will be happening in a few more chapters. We still have to contend with the Jasper/Alice drama and the record deal before we have the wedding. However, the story is wrapping up. I am hoping to finish it before 100 chapters, but that is looking to be a pipe dream. Anyhow, leave me love! Xoxox!**

# Go Roma

*Author's Note: I own NONE of this. No copyright infringement is intended. I just wanted to borrow the characters and play with them.*

*Thank you to all of the people who have faved and/or commented on my story! It means more to me than you can imagine!*

## Chapter 96: Go Roma!

### BPOV

I can't believe I fucked my fiancé in a public bathroom in Sorrento. Holy hell. I'm turning into such a hoochie. I fell into bed after our night at Voila and could not wipe the shit-eating grin off my face. I was never more turned on then during our time in ladies room. We've done some crazy shit, but this was amazing. I was getting wet as I thought about it. But I couldn't exactly do anything about it. Rose was in the bed next to me. That would be weird to get myself off while my roommate is sleeping.

*Would it?*

I'd only done this one other time on my own. I don't really count the phone sex with Edward. His voice spurred me on. I looked over at Rose's bed and she was snoring slightly. Her face covered with a sleep mask and her iPod in her ears. *I can be quiet. I need to get some sort of release.* I slipped off my panties and snaked my hand to my core. I spread my legs. With my middle finger, I circled my clit. My hips bucked at the feeling. *I wish Edward was doing this.* I closed my eyes and imagined Edward's hands being mine. I imagined our tryst in the bathroom. I could feel my arousal seep down my fingers as I slowly moved them over my sensitive nub.

I pictured Edward's body hovering over mine and he looking at me with such love and reverence as he slid into my slick folds. I eased two of my fingers into my body and rubbed my clit with my other hand. I bit my lip so I wouldn't cry

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out as I brought myself closer to the brink. My hips moved at an erotic rhythm. My breathing was haggard and I clamped down around my fingers. My eyes shot open and I arched off the bed. I removed my fingers from my body, wiping them on the sheets. As I slid my panties back up my legs, I shot a furtive glance at Rose. She was still snoring.

*Phew...*

I fell into a deep sleep after my self-inflicted orgasm. However, my dreams still kept me wanting more. Our night in the bathroom was on repeat in my subconscious. Damn. I was dreaming about another erotic moment when the alarm went off. I groaned and turned it off. I sat up and saw Rose smirking at me.

"Horny were you?" Rose giggled.

"Wha...what? You were asleep," I groaned.

"I played possum. You really miss being with your fiancé," she smiled.

"I've been spoiled. Sleeping with him every night for the past six months has been nothing short of amazing," I said as I flopped back on the pillows. "And last night..."

"Let me guess. That bench in the women's bathroom?"

I blushed and nodded. "Edward wanted to take me on the dance floor, though."

"He would have. He's as horny as you. If not more," Rose said with an arched brow.

"I bet he didn't jerk off with Tyler sleeping next to him," I joked.

"He probably did it in the shower," Rose said as she bumped my shoulder. "Come on, you horny bitch. Let's pack it up. We're going to Roma today!"

## La Cantante

"I know!" I shrieked. "Let's get packed." I hopped out of bed and took a cursory shower. I needed to wash off the sweat and other stuff from the club last night. *Not to mention the spoooge.* I, then, went to pack my clothes as Rose was sorting her purchases. She was putting them into her bag and pulling stuff out to wear. "That top is really cute, Rose."

"I thought so, but it doesn't fit right. Here, you try it," Rose said as she tossed the gauzy top to me. I slipped it over my body and it was fun and flirty, in a pretty blue color. "Bella, that looks beautiful on you. Totally keep it."

"How much do I owe you?"

"Nothing," Rose said with a dismissive wave of the hand.

"Thanks, Rose," I smiled as I pulled out a simple pair of black jeans to pair with my new top. I ran some mousse through my hair and put in the millefiori earrings that matched my top in my ears. "I am kind of bummed that we are in Rome for only three days and then we head home."

"I know. We could have spent the entire trip in Rome. I want to go the Spanish Steps, the Colosseum, the Forum, The Pantheon, Trevi Fountain, and don't forget ALL of the shopping."

"God, you're worse than Alice," I giggled.

"I wonder how she's doing?"

As we were talking, my phone rang from its charger. I checked the phone number. "Speak of the devil...it's the pixie herself," I said. "Hello?"

"Bella?" Alice mumbled pathetically.

"Yeah, I'm here," I said.

"Are you alone?"

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"No, I'm in the room with Rose."

"Oh."

"I'll step out onto the balcony, okay?"

"Yeah," Alice whimpered.

I moved through the room and went out onto the balcony overlooking the Bay of Napoli. "Okay, I'm outside. What's up?"

"Bella, I fucked up," Alice cried. "I made such a huge mistake."

"I'm not going to lie. You did," I said curtly. "You betrayed Jasper's confidence and his trust. Why Alice?"

"I love him, Bella. He's my world. I don't know how to fix this," she muttered.

"Well, if it's fixable, it's not going to take overnight. It'll take time, Alice. However, you have a bunch of people who are incredibly disappointed and pissed at you."

"Are you?"

"Yes, I am. But you are my friend and will be my sister in a matter of months. However, because of your actions, Edward lost his best man and best friend. Breaking Midnight lost their bassist. And I honestly don't think Jasper is returning to Emerson."

"Oh, God!" Alice sobbed. "What have I done?"

"Alice, it doesn't matter what you've done. It's your actions from now on that dictate our reactions. Have you been to the doctor?"

"Yeah. The shrink believes that I have bipolar disorder," Alice said sadly. "I'm on some heavy duty medication."



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"The disorder probably clouded your judgment, but it still doesn't negate the fact that you tricked Jasper," I said.

"How am I going to get him back?"

"You may have come to the realization that you might not be able to," I said.

"Bella! We got to go!" Rose bellowed from the room.

"Alice, I have to cut this short. We need to load up the bus. I'll talk to you when we get back from Italy, okay?" I said.

"Yeah. I'm really sorry, Bella. Please tell everyone that I'm sorry too. Give Edward my love," Alice mumbled dejectedly.

"I will. Love you, Pixie," I said.

"Love you, Bella."

Alice hung up the phone and I headed back into the room. Rose, bless her heart, packed my bag for me. "Thank you, so much, Rosalie!"

"No problem. You were dealing with a crazed pixie," Rose snickered. "Let's get our Rome on!"

We headed down to the lobby and our luggage was put into the bus. Edward snuck up behind me and his arms wrapped around my waist. He was nuzzling my neck his soft lips. I leaned back into his embrace, relishing his attention. "You two really are nauseating," Rose said as she made a gagging noise.

"Just wait, Rose," Edward said as he nibbled on my exposed part of my shoulder. "Wait until you see Emmett and you'll see who's nauseating."

"More vocal," I giggled.

"Shut it, Little Miss

'I-Was-So-Turned-On-From-the-Club-I-Finger-Fucked-Myself-with-my-Roommate-Sle  
Rose challenged.

I turned beet red and buried my head in my hands. *I can't believe she said that.* Edward held me tighter. "You got off?" Edward cooed in my ear. I nodded slightly. "Thinking about me?" I nodded again. "That's so fucking hot."

I turned in his arms and whispered in his ear, "I couldn't get what we did in the bathroom out of my head. I got wet all over again," I purred. "Actually, I'm feeling pretty turned on right now."

"Fuck me," Edward said as he dipped me into a deep, passionate kiss.

"Enough! Do I need to break out a hose?" Rose laughed.

"No," Edward and I said. "Sorry."

We got onto the bus and took our now requisite spots in the back of the bus. Edward pulled my legs into his lap and rubbed my feet. "I missed you last night, baby," he said with a crooked grin.

"So did I. As Rose so wonderfully explained," I blushed.

"Bella, don't be embarrassed. I'm going to be perfectly honest. I showered last night and jerked off. I did again this morning. What we did last night at the club was insanely hot," Edward said as he caressed my cheeks. "I know that's not us. But it was fun while we did it. I wouldn't mind doing it again."

"That was probably a one-time deal, Edward," I giggled.

"We'll see," Edward said as he nuzzled my neck with his nose. "You smell really good, love."

"Thank you," I said as I ran my fingers through his damp hair. "So do you."

## La Cantante

"So, do you have an preferences as to what we're doing in Rome?" Edward asked.

"I want to see it all," I laughed. "But, we'll have to see when we get there."

"I love you, Bella," Edward said as he continued to rub my feet.

"I love you, too," I said as I kissed him sweetly. "Oh, Alice called me this morning."

"What did she want?" Edward asked, his voice full of venom.

"Relax, Edward. She was calling to kind of apologize," I explained. I then told him about our conversation and he softened up a bit. His sour attitude calmed and he eventually began to feel sorry for Alice. She was just diagnosed with a debilitating mental disorder and she needs her family. "It still sucks what she did to Jasper, but she's our sister, Edward."

"I know. But we're still going to get Jasper. He will be coming back to Emerson," Edward said ardently.

"I've never been to Texas," I giggled. "It could be fun."

"Unlikely," Edward said as he arched a brow. I sighed and turned my body. I leaned against his chest. Edward wrapped his arms around my body and we watched as the Italian countryside speed past us. At some point, Edward took out his iPod and we shared the ear buds, listening to the quiet music he had programmed on it. Edward ran his fingers up and down my arms as we cuddled on the bus. A few hours later, we were driving in a more suburban area. Eventually we pulled up the Grand Hotel Plaza in Rome, the hotel we were staying in for the rest of our trip. Eleazar got off the bus and he checked us in. He came back in and distributed our keys. Eleazar made a few announcements before he let us off the bus. Tonight we'd be having rehearsal with Professor Caius D'Angelo and his choir. We needed to be back at the hotel by no later than six. It was currently two now, so that left us four hours to roam around Rome.

## La Cantante

We decided to drop off our bags in the rooms and do the Spanish Steps and the Trevi Fountain. As we were leaving the bus, Edward was tapping out a text. "Who are you texting?"

"Jasper," Edward said as he smiled. "Checking to see how he's doing."

"Oh, okay. Meet you in the lobby in ten, alright?"

"See you then, love," Edward said as he kissed my lips chastely.

Rose and I went to our room and dropped off our suitcases. I grabbed my messenger bag and headed downstairs with Rose. Ben, Tyler, Jessica, Tia and Edward were sitting by the exit. We got in the taxi line and headed out into the bustling city of Rome. Edward laced his fingers with mine as we sat in the taxi. We were deposited near the Trevi Fountain. Edward took out his camera and was snapping pictures left and right. Pictures of the fountain. Pictures of us acting silly and goofy. Then I heard something.

"Rosalie!"

*What was that? Who is calling Rosalie?*

I looked at Edward and he was smirking as he was snapping his pictures. "Edward?"

"Yes?"

"You know something," I said as I pulled his arms down. Edward grinned crookedly and pulled the camera back to his face.

"Rosalie! Rosalie Hale!"

I turned and saw Emmett running toward us. *Emmett! What the hell?* Rose was rooted in her spot, her face a picture of shock, lust, awe, and complete surprise. Edward snapped a few pictures, laughing as he did.

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"Rose!" Emmett breathed as he came up to her. Rose blinked and screamed so loudly. I think Sicily and Greece heard her shriek. She bounced up into his arms, wrapping her legs around his waist. Emmett spun her around, peppering her face with kisses.

"You so knew he was coming," I smiled.

"Guilty," Edward said with a sheepish grin. "Oh, watch."

"Watch what?" I asked as I turned back to Rose and Emmett. He had put her down and was looking at her reverently. Then he elegantly swept down to one knee. "Is he proposing?"

"Yep," Edward grinned as he continued taking pictures.

"You are in so much trouble, Edward Anthony Masen Cullen," I said quietly as I smiled at my brother proposing to his love.

"I know," Edward shrugged.

Another shriek filled the area around the fountain and Rose jumped up and down. She was nodding and screaming yes over and over again. Emmett was laughing. He finally captured her hand and slid a ring on her finger. Rose held her hand up and covered her face. Emmett stood up and pulled her in an embrace, kissing her deeply. They pulled apart and Rose sprinted off to me. She pummeled me with a tight hug. "We're going to be SISTERS!" she yelled in my ear. "Emmett's in Rome and he proposed." Rose pulled away and looked at me. "Did you know?"

"I'm just as surprised as you, Rose," I laughed. Emmett sauntered up and wrapped his arms around Rose's waist. "Hey, Emmett. Surprised to see you here."

"Hey Isabelly," Emmett grinned. "I proposed. She said yes."

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"Let me see the ring," I gushed. Rose held up her hand and showed me the ring. It was our grandmother's engagement ring. It was white gold with filigree around the band. It housed a round cut diamond and had baguettes on either side. "So beautiful, Rose."

"Emmett says it was your grandmother's," Rose sniffled. "It's so elegant."

"Yes it is," I smiled.

"How long have you been in Rome, Emmett?" Tyler asked as he strode up to us.

"I got it late last night. I'm staying at a youth hostel," Emmett said.

"Well, we're going to get you into our hotel tonight, Em," Edward said. "I am hopeful that he will allow you to stay with us."

"But, I want to stay with Rosie," Emmett whined.

"You will. Trust me. Let's get you into the hotel first, Emmett," Edward chuckled.

We spent the rest of the afternoon at the fountain, the Spanish Steps and some other sites close by. Afterward, Rose went to the youth hostel with Emmett while the rest of us headed to the hotel. As we were heading into the hotel, Edward saw Eleazar speaking with Carmen. "Let's go speak to Eleazar about Emmett," he said.

I nodded and we caught up with them in the lobby. "Bella! Edward! How are you doing? Enjoying Rome?" Carmen asked.

"Very much. We actually had a bit of excitement," I smiled.

"I hope it's good," Eleazar said with a quirked brow. "You've had enough drama recently."

## La Cantante

"It is exciting. My brother, Emmett, came to Italy and he proposed to Rosalie at the Trevi Fountain," I gushed.

"Oh, that's wonderful!" Carmen said. "So romantic."

"Well, we were wondering if Emmett can join us in the hotel so he could be close to his new fiancée," Edward wheedled. "He would stay with Tyler and me."

"Normally, I would say no," Eleazar said. "However, since we've paid for a triple for you, I don't see why not. Tell Rose and Emmett congratulations."

"Thank you!" I said as I bounced on my toes. "We'll see you at rehearsal." Carmen and Eleazar walked away. I threw my arms around Edward's neck and he laughed heartily. "He gets to stay!"

"And you get to sleep with me and Crowley," Edward retorted.

"Oh, right. Shit. The snore monster," I said as I wrinkled my nose. "Got any extra ear plugs."

"No, but I think they have them in the gift shop."

xx LC xx

The ear plugs did not help. With Tyler's snoring and Emmett and Rose's cries of passion, I didn't get a lick of sleep. I was in hell.

Well, not really hell. Edward held me as we were assaulted by the cacophony of sounds, grumbling about he was fucking exhausted and that he was going to murder Crowley in his sleep. *Join the club, love.*

The alarm went off and we were having a rehearsal in the morning and then a bus tour of Rome and the Vatican. We also were going to have our final rehearsal in the Sistine Chapel for our performance tomorrow. It was a jam-packed day, but it'll be fun. But exhausting.

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*If only we had gotten more sleep...*

Eleazar wanted us to wear our Emerson University Singers polos today. So, here we are. 110 of the most talented singers in Emerson University. Dressed exactly alike. Navy blue or powder blue polo shirts with khakis. We all were bitching. Edward even managed to scrounge up an Emerson polo for Emmett. If he was joining our motley crew, he'd look the part. He scowled at this development. But Edward reminded Emmett that he was staying in a four star hotel as opposed to a youth hostel. That polo was on faster than Alice's driving.

At breakfast, Emmett was introduced to Eleazar and Carmen. They offered their congratulations to he and Rosalie. Emmett then said that he'd like to watch the concert of ours at the Sistine Chapel. Even off to the side. Eleazar said that he would have to sit backstage to listen as the concert was sold out and Emmett would have to 'earn' his keep. Pretty much he was told that he was going to be a luggage and folder monkey. Using his muscles for good and not evil. Emmett eagerly agreed.

We loaded onto the bus and did our scenic bus tour of Rome. We started with the Colosseum. We roamed around there for an hour so. Then we moved to the Pantheon and the Roman Forum. Our next stop was the Borghese Galleria, an art museum of all of the artwork collected by the Borghese family. We then piled into the bus and drove to the Vatican city after we got some lunch. When we arrived to the Vatican, our polos were explained. We needed to be somewhat decent and reserved. The polos offered the coverage that was needed. It made us look like morons, but we got to see the Vatican.

We went to the Vatican Museum, St. Peter's Basilica and ended with the Sistine Chapel. The beauty of the Sistine Chapel was beyond words. The fact that Michelangelo painted the ceiling was amazing. I think my jaw scraped the floor when I walked in. The only think that flummoxed me more was the fact that we were *performing* here. Tomorrow. It was surreal. Our tour concluded and Dr. D'Angelo met us. He led us to the rehearsal space we were using for some pick up work. Then we would eat dinner and do our final dress rehearsal in the chapel itself.



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Dr. D'Angelo was conducting the *Requiem*. His conducting was so different from Eleazar's. Eleazar had a fluidity to his movements. He made his conducting pattern look like a graceful dance. Dr. D'Angelo was more precise, but elegant in his own right. Also, Dr. D'Angelo was a gorgeous man. He could give Edward a run for his money.

Seriously.

I mean, for an old guy.

If things don't work out with me and Edward...Dr. D'Angelo, here's my number. Call me.

Is that wrong?

Admit it. It's slightly wrong.

Dr. D'Angelo's skin was a rich tan color. His hair was black with the perfect amount of distinguishing grey at the temples. His features were angular and refined. He looked like he stepped out of a Renaissance painting with his face. His frame was tall, about the height of Edward. He was lanky but not gangly. His slim frame fit his stature. However, the most beautiful part of Dr. D'Angelo was his eyes. They were a bright violet. They looked like amethysts in his head. I'd never seen anybody with violet eyes. It was cool.

However, Dr. D'Angelo's English was broken. He would get phrases wrong and get very flustered. He would look to Eleazar and Carmen for assistance and they would laugh and correct Dr. D'Angelo. Apparently Eleazar and Dr. D'Angelo met while working on their doctorate thesis and became fast and lifelong friends. When this opportunity came up, Dr. D'Angelo immediately thought of his friend and well, there you go.

We had a huge feast of Italian delicacies. I swear I gained a hundred pounds on this trip with all of the delicious food we ate. Edward gained about two hundred. His appetite rivaled Emmett's around Italian food. On his plate for dinner, he had one of everything and he shoveled it all in. "You are such a pig,

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Edward. I mean, really gross."

"What? I'm a growing boy," he smirked, earning a poke from Emmett.

"You stole my line, Cullen," Emmett snickered. "But you do need some meat on your bones. Too skinny."

"He's got enough meat, Emmett McCarty Swan," I said as I narrowed my eyes.

"I could say something highly inappropriate, but given our location, I will refrain," Emmett said. "However, I will make a comment when we get back to the hotel."

"Emmett, you will be sleeping with Crowley tonight," Rose said. "He snores."

"I do not snore," Tyler bellowed.

"Yes, you do!" we all shouted. Tyler ducked his head and his cheeks tinged pink. Edward took out his cell phone and found a recording. It was Tyler's snoring from a couple nights ago.

"Is that me?" Tyler squeaked. Edward nodded and grinned. "Crap, I do snore. No wonder I can't get a girlfriend."

"You can't get a girlfriend because you have no skills," Emmett said seriously. Tyler scowled at Emmett and we all laughed. *Poor Tyler. Getting it from all ends.*

We finished our meals and did our final rehearsal. Dr. D'Angelo complimented us on our professionalism and musicianship. He said that we were the best group that he'd worked with, besides his own. He also gave us some information about the concert tomorrow. Then we were dismissed. We loaded up on the bus and headed back to our hotel.

Not wanting to upset the chaperones, Rose and Emmett separated. Emmett slept with Edward and Tyler. In Tyler's bed and his snoring. Edward just

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LOVED that. He shot me a look of complete desperation, begging to stay with me but no go, Cullen.

Once we got into our room, Rose sat me down on her bed. "Bella, will you be my maid of honor?" Rose asked.

"Um, duh," I said with an emphatic eye roll. "Of course, Rose. I'm so happy we're going to be sisters."

"Me too," Rose smiled. "We're probably going to wait until Emmett has graduated. So it'll be next summer."

"Whenever it is, your wedding will be beautiful, Rose. Just don't make me wear pink. I hate pink," I grumbled.

"It'll be red and black. So relax, Bella," Rose snickered. "Do I look like a pink girl?"

"Hell no."

"Pink will be Alice's wedding color," Rose said with a sardonic grin. Her face immediately fell. "Do you think that she and Jasper will be alright?"

"I don't know. Jasper is incredibly pissed and doesn't trust Alice at all. She deceived him in the most horrific of ways. It's not right or fair to him to put Jasper in that situation. It'll take a great deal of time before things can be worked out," I shrugged.

"It sucks, Bella. We were so happy and in love. Two of us are engaged. Alice should be able to share in that joy. But she screwed herself," Rose whispered.

"She's sick, Rose. It turns out that she was recently diagnosed with bipolar disorder. The miscarriage was her trigger," I said. "She'll be medicated but it doesn't stop what she did. And that fact that it was wrong."

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"Whatever happens, it'll be for the best," Rose shrugged. "Let's shower tonight and I'll do your hair and makeup tomorrow. You look fabulous darling!"

"Would you like me to return the favor?" I asked sarcastically.

"No thanks," Rose said dryly. "You...me...not happening...No offense."

"None taken. I know I'm a hot mess when it comes to makeup and hair," I giggled. "You want to go first?"

"Sure," Rose smiled. She grabbed her toiletry bag and skipped to the bathroom.

The water turned on and I settled into bed, reading a book. I was sitting there for a few minutes when quiet knock came through the door. I padded to the door and looked through the peephole. Emmett was standing there, wringing his hands nervously. I opened the door and arched a brow. "Bella, I can't stay in there. Tyler just tried to grope me."

"Emmett, you can't stay in here. Eleazar won't let Edward and I room together and he knows us. He graciously allowed you to stay with us. We let you stay with Rose last night, but dear lord I thought we were going to get caught with all of the screaming. Sleep with Edward. He won't grope you," I said, rolling my eyes.

"He may think I'm you and try to cuddle," Emmett grumbled.

"At least one Swan is getting cuddled by Edward," I challenged. "Go to bed, Emmett."

"But, Isabelly," he whined.

"Don't call me Isabelly. That is a sure-fire way to NOT get your way," I said. I turned Emmett around and marched him to his room. Using his key, I opened the door and pushed him inside. "Sleep with Edward. Good night."

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I went back into my room and Rose was done with her shower. She was in her pajamas and brushing her wet blond hair. I grabbed my own toiletry bag and showered the grime and sweat of the day off my body. I took extra time to wash and condition my hair. When I was done with my shower, I put lotion on my arms and legs. I put on my pajamas and went into the bedroom. Rose was scribbling in a journal that she was keeping for our trip. She had her iPod in her ears and she was bopping as she wrote. I picked up my book and read until Rose was done writing. She pointed to the lights and I nodded. The room was engulfed in darkness and I fell back into my pillows. I closed my eyes and fell asleep quickly

xx LC xx

The alarm went off early. Rose dragged me out of bed and plopped me into a chair by the balcony. I scowled as she began attacking my head with a curling iron. She mirrored my look and smacked my arm. As we were working on my head, someone knocked at the door. Rose handed me the curling iron and went to answer it. Edward walked in, barely coherent. "Rosalie Hale, you are worse than my sister. Infinitely worse," he grumbled. "Morning, love." Edward kissed my lips and handed me coffee. *God Bless Edward Cullen.*

"I'm not as hyper, Cullen. Nor do I shriek like the pixie," Rose answered as she continued curling my hair. "Did you make the arrangements?"

"Yes, I did, Rose," Edward sighed. "Here's your credit card, back."

"What are you two talking about?" I asked as I looked up at them.

Edward pushed up his glasses. "Rose wants to extend her stay in Italy with Emmett. Wants it to be a surprise. I woke up extra early this morning and made arrangements with the hotel concierge and booking flights for the two of them. Oh, and thanks, Bella. Emmett was spooning with me this morning. Wrong Swan. I want the smaller, more petite, distinctly feminine one spooning with me. Not the large, overgrown child with morning wood," Edward said dryly. "I think he tried to cop a feel of my chest. Then he realized that I didn't have boobs and he freaked."

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"I would have paid money to see that," Rose snickered.

"How do you sleep with him? He's such a bed hog," Edward said as he fell onto my bed. "And he grunts."

"Did you check for wet spots?" Rose asked seriously.

"Gah!" Edward screeched as he hopped up off the bed, dancing around the room like a crazed monkey. "I slept in Emmett spooge! I think I'm going to puke." He ran his hands frantically over his body, trying to rub off the 'spooge' from his jeans.

"I'm kidding, Edward. Relax. You look like a crazy man," Rose laughed. I was holding back laughter at Edward's reaction. "Well, you are a crazy man."

"Shut it, Hale. I did you a huge favor and this is how you repay me?" Edward asked. "That's cruel, woman."

"Ah, relax soon-to-be brother-in-law," Rose replied. "You're just too easy to tease." Edward scowled and did what every mature man should do. He stuck his tongue out at her. Rose flipped him off and continued working on my head. "Don't you have to get dressed and shit?"

"I just need to put on my tuxedo and contacts. I'm good," Edward replied as he sat back. "I'd rather hang out with you two then the groping twins across the hall."

"Tyler groped you, too?" I asked.

"His hand was on my junk," Edward snorted. "I'm scarred for life."

"Couple that with the snoring, Tyler is NEVER going to get laid," Rose said as she finished with the curling iron. She then began twisting my hair into an intricate half up-do. "Edward make yourself useful. Hold these bobby pins."

"I'm not your assistant, Rosalie," he said with a quirked brow.

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"Do you value your balls? Do you want to father children?"

"Yes, Rose."

"Then hold the damn pins," Rose laughed. Edward grumbled and sat next to me. In one hand, he laced his fingers with mine and in the other, he held the damn bobby pins.

Rose chattered on about her wedding plans. Edward had a glazed over look in his eyes. I'm certain I had the same expression, but Rose was oblivious. After she finished with my hair, she shooed Edward out of the room. Edward needed to get dressed anyway. We were heading out in an hour. Rose curled her hair quickly as I put on my dress. Her blond tresses were pulled back into a sleek chignon and she looked so elegant. Even wearing a pair of sleep shorts and Emmett's t-shirt, she looked elegant.

*Lucky bitch.*

Rose put on her dress for University Singers and then put on a layer of makeup on my face. It was subtle and smoky. I then put on my jewelry and slid on my shoes. Rose was completely gussied up and adjusting her own jewelry. I caught her sneaking a few peaks at her engagement ring. It was sparkling in the sunlight that filled our room. She smiled slightly and held her hand to her chest. "I'm happy for you, Rose. You found your prince charming...well, Emmett."

"He is my prince charming. You found yours too. Edward is pretty special," Rose beamed. "Let's sing in an iconic church and make beautiful music."

"Damn straight, woman," I giggled as I grabbed my messenger bag. We headed downstairs to the lobby. Edward was chatting with Ben. Emmett was looking highly uncomfortable in a pair of dress pants that obviously did not belong to him. They were an inch or so too short. He was also wearing a dress shirt and one of Edward's ties. Emmett was nibbling on his fingernail until he saw Rose. He bounded over to her and kissed her fiercely. She then smacked him for messing up her lipstick. Edward walked up to me and dipped me into our own

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passionate embrace. His tongue traced my lower lip and slid between my teeth. I moaned lightly as he brought us back to vertical. "Wow."

"Have you looked in the mirror, beautiful?" Edward asked as he caressed my cheek, moving down my neck. "You are a vision."

"Thank you, handsome," I blushed. "You know how I feel about you in a tux."

He puffed his chest and kissed my nose. Eleazar pulled us into a small ballroom before we loaded the bus. He explained the plan for the day. We would perform Mozart's *Requiem*. Afterward, there would be a small reception and then we need to head back to the hotel, pack our belongings and prepare to leave Italy. He explained that a handful of students were staying behind for extended trips for classes or pleasure. Those students would need to arrange their own transportation to their new hotels. Eleazar finally said that this year was one of the best years in his professional career and that we were some of the finest musicians he's ever worked with. He thanked the seniors, who missed walking for graduation for the trip. Eleazar gave each of them a small bag as he acknowledged them. He also thanked the section leaders. Eleazar handed us each another small bag as a token of appreciation. Carmen then took the floor, congratulating us on our fabulous tour and growth as musicians. She smiled and we headed out to the buses.

We got to the Sistine Chapel and did a brief warm-up in the rehearsal space. Emmett was standing in between Rose and me and he was amazed at our sound. He'd never heard us like this. Edward was standing behind Emmett and Emmett gawked at how different Edward's voice was, compared to what he used during Breaking Midnight performances. His singing voice was smooth, like velvet, during University Singers. However, when he sang with Breaking Midnight, it had a rougher edge.

Dr. D'Angelo came in and he reminded us a few things before we performed. He then complimented us on our appearance and told us to break an arm. Eleazar leaned in and whispered in Dr. D'Angelo's ear. He amended his statement: break a leg. We chuckled and walked out into the chapel. I was blown away at the beauty of this place. That we were singing here. Edward laid



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a hand on my hip and squeezed lightly. I snuck a peak back at him and grinned. He just winked and we walked up the risers. With precision, Dr. D'Angelo stood on the podium and shook the hand of the concert master. He grinned at the orchestra and then turned to us. He flicked his wrist and our folders went up as the instruments in orchestra readied themselves to play. I noticed that Eleazar was standing to the right of Tyler, holding a folder. He was singing with us. *Now, that's cool.*

With a flourish, Dr. D'Angelo gave his prep and our final concert of the year as University Singers began. We sang like angels in the Sistine Chapel. 110 voices, combining to be one. 50 instruments, working together to create beautiful harmonies. As I listened to our voices, our music, I felt my eyes prick with tears. This moment was so powerful. So meaningful. Next to me, I had my love. Edward. He was sharing this experience with me. I shot a furtive glance at him and he had tears in his eyes as well. It was just as poignant for him too.

As quickly as the concert began, it was over. Dr. D'Angelo bowed and gestured to us as a choir. He then pointed to Eleazar who came up and shook Dr. D'Angelo's hand. They took a bow together. The audience stood up and we heard random shouts of 'Brava!' and 'Encore!' It was unreal.

Edward leaned forward and whispered in my ear, "*L'amo, il mio cantante. Il mio bella, perfeziona l'angelo di un cantante...*"

"*L'amo più. Il mio cantante. Il mio amante. Mio marito. La mia vita.*"

**A/N: And Italy has come to an end. As stated earlier, this story is winding down. We have to address the Alice/Jasper drama. Leave me a review as to whether or not they need to get back together or go their separate ways. I'm curious as to what you all, my readers, think. We have Bella and Edward's wedding and Twilight Recording Studios business to finalize.**

**Leave me love...or hate...or candy...you get the picture ;-)**

**TRANSLATIONS:**

## La Cantante

***L'amo, il mio cantante. Il mio bello, perfeziona l'angelo di un cantante... " -  
I love you, my singer. My beautiful , perfect, angel of a singer...***

***L'amo più. Il mio cantante. Il mio amante. Mio marito. La mia vita. - I love  
you more. My singer. My lover. My husband. My life.***